

WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION

1893

AT CHICAGO



SIBERIA

AND

THE GREAT SIBERIAN RAILWAY

BY THE

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND MANUFACTURES

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

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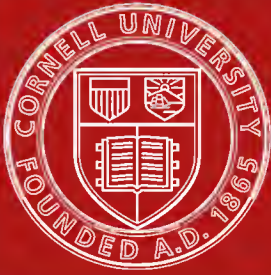
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THE
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SIBERIA
AND
THE GREAT SIBERIAN RAILWAY

WITH A GENERAL MAP

BY THE

Department of Trade and Manufactures Ministry of Finance

FOR THE

WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION

AT

CHICAGO

EDITOR OF THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

JOHN MARTIN CRAWFORD

U S CONSUL GENERAL TO RUSSIA.

Vol V

ST PETERSBURG

1893

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Published by the Department of Trade and Manufactures Imperial Ministry of Finance.

P R E F A C E.

The beginning of the construction of the Great Siberian Railway, which will unite the most distant points of Europe and Asia and will draw the Old World nearer to the New, practically coincides with the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America.

The accomplishment of this magnificent and historic task has fallen to the lot of Russia. Notwithstanding the enormity of the material expenses, Russia has cheerfully and earnestly accepted the undertaking, one of the most important in the history of peaceful acquisition, of knowledge and of labour.

The Great Siberian Railway will benefit not only Russia, it will do great service to the material and spiritual cultivation of humanity, and from this point of view will acquire much importance and interest for the whole civilized world. Following this idea, Mr. S. J. Vitte, Minister of Finance, commissioned the Department of Trade and Manufactures, to prepare for the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago a description of this great railroad, and also of Siberia, a land little known to the people outside of the Empire.

The present volume therefore contains a history of the occupation and colonization of this extensive territory, its geographical description, the review of its industry and trade, the description of its land and water communications, and finally the history and contemporary state of the questions concerning the construction of the Great Siberian

Railway. In order to explain more clearly the geography of the land, this work is furnished with a map of the Russian Empire showing the general network of Russian railways, together with the Great Siberian Railway as well as the principal deposits of the noble metals, with which the country is richly provided.

The present edition has been accomplished under the direction of Mr. V. I. Kovalevsky, Director of the Department of Trade and Manufactures, and President of the Imperial Russian Commission for the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago, together with the active assistance of Senator P. P. Semenov, Vice-President of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, a man well known to the civilized world through his geographical works. This volume is being simultaneously translated into the English language with the kind assistance of the Consul-General of the United States, Mr. J. M. Crawford, who consented at the request of the Imperial Ministry of Finance to supervise and edit the English translation of this work.

P R E F A C E .

TO THE
ENGLISH TRANSLATION.

Of that great expanse of territory reaching all the way from the Ural mountains to the Pacific Ocean and from the Frozen seas to the borders of the Celestial Empire there is perhaps little more than the name, Siberia, authentically known to the general public. Yet with its wide-stretching plains, its magnificent water systems and its unknown wealth of noble metals and other valuable mineral deposits buried in its bosom, there is for such a land a future too great to be overlooked at the present day.

With the steel rails of the Great Siberian Railway piercing their steady way through the vast country to the Far East, thus completing the great arc of the circle that in direct lines, winding about the 50th parallel of north latitude, will steam around the world, the resources of this great unknown become of immediate importance to our own Pacific slopes, and through them to the whole people of the United States. It was therefore with great satisfaction that I welcomed this the 5th volume of the series on *The Industries of Russia*, designed for the World's Columbian Exposition, and accepted the invitation of the Imperial Minister

of Finance to edit and supervise its translation into English. In full realization of its unquestionable interest and value to the American people I have laboured hard to make this Edition as faithful to the original as the very limited time and exigencies of the case would permit.

Together with an historical account of the conquest of Siberia, of the subjugation of the petty principdoms and nomads, with a glimpse of the colonization going on up to the present day, and with a review of the efforts of the Government to induce the various Siberian tribes to adopt settled modes of life and engage in regular industrial pursuits, will be found a full and scientific resumé of its flora and fauna, of its mineral resources, its possibilities of agriculture and trade, and of its climatic and physical characteristics.

This work contains also numerous official tables and statistics covering the several industries of the country, and is accompanied with a general map, showing among other matters of interest the various railway surveys that have been made, examined and rejected, as well as the line which now, in process of construction, winds its way along the rivers, over the mountains and across the vast plains on its way to the eastern shores, thus to form a through railway route from ocean to ocean in the Old as in the New World, to the mutual advantage of the two great and friendly nations, the Empire of Russia and the Republic of the United States of America.

To His Excellence, Mr. V. I. Kovalevsky, Director of the Department of Trade and Manufactures, Actual Councillor of State, and President of the Imperial Russian Commission, World's Columbian Exposition, ably assisted by Senator P. P. Semenov, Vice-President of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, is due the well-earned credit and honour of formulating and of carrying out the original idea of His Excellence, Mr. S. J. Vitte, Imperial Minister of Finance, with reference to the preparation of this work, and of editing and publishing the same in the Russian language.

Although this volume, like all the others of this series, has been prepared in extreme haste and under very great difficulties, rendering it impossible to avoid errors, nevertheless, I trust the reader will find pleasure and profit in examining this authentic and official resumé of the present and future interests of that enormous and immensely rich country, Siberia, the Great East of the Russian Empire, separated only by pacific waters from the Great West of the United States, and which are destined in the near future to be in intimate commercial relations with each other.

J. M. Crawford.

St. Petersburg, August 15, 1893.

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RUSSIAN WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

The following tables will serve to define the Russian weights and measures in terms of the French Metric System, as also those which are used in the United States.

I. Long measure.

The lineal measures of Russia have for a unit the foot, which, according to the laws of Peter the Great, is the same as the English foot.

1 Russian foot	= 1 English or United States foot.
»	= 12 inches = 120 lines = 1,200 points.
»	= 0.304794 metre = 30.4794 centimetres.
1 Russian arshine	= 16 vershoks = 28 inches.
»	= 2 $\frac{1}{3}$ feet = $\frac{7}{9}$ or 0.77778 yard = 0.71118 metre.
1 Russian sagene	= 7 feet = 3 arshines.
»	= 2.13356 metres = 213.356 centimetres.
»	= 2.3333 yards.
1 Russian verst	= 500 sagenes = 3,500 feet.
»	= 1066.78 metres = 1.06678 kilometres.
»	= 0.66269 English mile.
1 geographical mile	= 6.956 versts = 7.420 kilometres.
»	= 4.601 English miles

II. Square measure.

1 square sagene	= 49 sq. feet = 4.5521 sq. metres.
»	= 5.4444 sq. yards.
1 dessiatine (Russian land measure)	= 2,400 sq. sagenes.
»	= 1.0925 hectares = 2.6997 acres.
1 square verst	= 250,000 sq. sagenes = 104.17 dessiatines.
»	= 1.1380 sq. kilometres.
»	= 0.43916 sq. English mile.
1 square geographical mile	= 48.38 square versts.
»	= 55.06 » kilometres.
»	= 21.25 » English miles.

III. Cubic measure.

1 cubic inch	= 16.386 cubic centimetres.
1 cubic sagene	= 343 cubic feet.
»	= 9.712 metres.
»	= 12.704 cubic yards.

D R Y M E A S U R E .

1 chetvert	= 8 chetveriks = 2.099 hectolitres.
»	= 5.9567 American bushels.
1 chetverik	= 8 quarts = 1601.22 cubic inches.
»	= the volume of 64 Russian pounds of water at 13 ¹ / ₃ ° R. temperature.
»	= 26.238 litres = 0.26238 hectolitre.
»	= 0.7446 American bushel.

L I Q U I D M E A S U R E .

1 vedro	= ¹ / ₄₀ of a barrel = 10 shtoffs or krouzhki = 750.57 cubic inches = volume of 30 Russian pounds of water at 13 ¹ / ₃ ° R. temperature.
»	= 12.299 litres.
»	= 2.707 English or 3.249 American gallons.

IV. Avoirdupois weight.

1 berkovets	= 10 pouds = 0.1638 metric ton = 163.80 kilograms.
»	= 0.161217 English ton = 3.2243 cwt.
1 poud	= 40 Russian pounds = 0.01638 metric ton = 16.380 kilograms.
»	= 0.32243 cwt. or 32.243 Eng. lbs.
1 Russian pound	= 32 lots = 96 zolotniks = weight of 25.019 cubic inches of water at 13 ¹ / ₃ ° R. in vacuo.
»	= 0.40951 kilogram = 409.51 grams.
»	= 0.90282 English pound.

T R O Y W E I G H T .

1 zolotnik	= 96 dolee.
»	= 4.2657 grams.
»	= 65.830 grains Troy.

V. Complex table.

1 rouble paper per dessiatine	= 19.06 cents per acre.
1 » gold » »	= 28.59 » » »
1 kopeck paper » poud	= 31.9 » » ton.
1 » gold » »	= 47.88 » » »
1 » paper » chetvert	= 0.0863 » » bushel.
1 » gold » »	= 0.1295 » » »
1 » paper » poud of wheat	= 1.282 » » »
1 » gold » »	= 1.923 » » »
1 chervert per dessiatine	= 2.2081 bushels per acre.
1 poud » »	= 13.377 English pounds per acre.
1 vedro » »	= 1.204 American gallons per acre.
1 kopeck paper per poud and verst	= 48.15 cents per ton and mile.
1 » gold » » » »	= 72.225 » » » »



S I B E R I A.

AND THE

G R E A T S I B E R I A N R A I L W A Y.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### **H i s t o r i c a l S k e t c h.**

Geographical and administrative division of Siberia; historical review of its occupation, exploration and settlement; its subdivision into five large geographical regions; its administrative division; the first contact of the Russians with Siberia by means of the Stroganovs; annexation of a part of Siberia to Russia at the end of the sixteenth century; gradual occupation by the Russians of the whole of Siberia in the course of the seventeenth century; first attempts at navigating the Arctic Ocean, and the Behring and Okhotsk seas; appearance of the Russians upon the Amour; struggle with China for the possession of the Littoral-Amour country; the Nerchinsk treaty; beginning of permanent colonization of Siberia at the end of the seventeenth, and its gradual realization during the eighteenth century; establishment of frontier defense lines called forth by the necessity of protecting colonization; development of colonization under the shelter of these lines; scientific explorations by sea and land in Siberia in the eighteenth century; surrender of Russo-American possessions to the Government of the United States; acquisition of Sakhalin and surrender of the Kuril Islands to Japan; settlement and exploration of Siberia in the first half of the nineteenth century; annexation of the Amour tract in the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century; scientific explorations in the Amour Littoral country; gradual occupation of the Kirghiz steppe country in the course of the nineteenth century; annexation to Russia of the country of Semirechinsk and Zailisk in the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century; significance and consequence of this fact so important to the history of Asiatic Russia; colonization of Siberia in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the position of the colonization question at the present time; recognition of the necessity of building a great railway through Siberia; visit to Siberia of the Tsarevich; and the foundation of the Siberian Railway Committee.

**U**NDER the name Siberia, in the most widely accepted meaning of the word, are understood all Russia's Asiatic possessions, with the exception of Transcaucasia, the Transcaspian territory and the Turkestan governor-generalship. Accordingly the Ural chain and river would appear to be the natural boundary between European Russia and Siberia. But the Ural chain, colossal in its linear extension, but not attaining any elevation and traversable almost imperceptibly in its lowest passes, with its mineral wealth scattered chiefly over its eastern slope, was never like other great mountain chains on the earth's surface, a separating barrier in the ethnographical and economical life of the peoples, but on the contrary, from the time of the occupation of Siberia by the Russians, proved as it were, a line uniting European and Asiatic Russia.

The Transural districts of the Perm government, in which the mineral wealth of the Urals is most abundant, and which are the largest furnishers of grain to the Ural mining population, have long been reckoned not to Siberia but to European Russia. In like manner

also the steppe Ural and Turgai regions, passing far beyond the Ural river and penetrating deeply into the interior of Asia, are not counted as belonging to Siberia, because the centres of gravity of these regions, that is, their administrative centres, are situated in European Russia. Thus, Siberia is composed of the following parts: 1. Two governments of the basin of the river Obi, namely, Tobolsk and Tomsk, forming the so-called Western Siberia; these governments entered formerly into the composition of a special governor-generalship now abolished, but are at present governed, each separately, upon identical lines with the governments of European Russia. 2. Two governments of the basin of the Yenissei, namely Yenisseisk and Irkutsk, forming the so-called Eastern Siberia, in the strict sense of the term, and entering into the composition of the East Siberian governor-generalship. These two component parts of Siberia form the original Siberia, that is, that Siberia which was long ago and constantly occupied by Russian colonists, and where from eighty to ninety per cent of the population belong to the Russian race. The remaining parts of Siberia form those outskirts of the country, which from their very nature or from their remoteness are yet very little settled by the Russians and either occupied by primitive Asiatic or native peoples or are deserts and even absolutely uninhabited, and may be compared not with the states but with the territories of the United States. To these outlying regions of Siberia belong: 3. The Yakutsk region, constituting in respect to administration the Yakutsk territory alone. This, the most vast of all the Siberian territories, occupies the immense basin of the Lena and the less considerable basins of the smaller rivers, for example, the Yana, Indighirka and Kolyma falling into the Arctic Ocean. The Yakutsk territory in administrative respects forms a part of the East Siberian governor-generalship. 4. The Amour and Littoral region; this consists of three territories, constituting the Amour governor-generalship, namely Transbaikalia, the Amour and the Littoral. These territories cover the whole of the Russian part of the basin of the Amour and the whole coast zone belonging to the basin of the Pacific or rather of the Japan, Okhotsk and Behring seas, including the vast peninsula of Kamchatka and the island of Sakhalin. 5. The steppe Kirghiz region; this consists of three territories, comprised in the Steppe governor-generalship, namely: those of Akmolinsk, Semipalatinsk and Semirechensk, in former times known under the collective name of the Kirghiz-Kaissak Hordes and Steppes. Composed as above, Siberia occupies the immense area of 250,000 square geographical miles, being twenty-five times greater than Germany and two and a half times European Russia.

The annexation of Siberia to the Russian Empire took place at the end of the sixteenth century. The occupation by the Russians of this vast country was effected without any particularly bloody wars and hardly cost the Government an effort. The free Cossacks very rapidly conquered Siberia, and after them other intrepid seekers of booty poured in like a wave.

The principal pioneers in the occupation of Siberia at that time were adventurers, such as traders, sable hunters, trappers and fishermen. Organizing artels or societies they distanced by far the Government colonization, and scattered themselves over unknown wastes. In one spot they collected *yassak*, or a tax on furs; in another they destroyed wild animals, and looked for fish and mammoth tusks; they drove off or bartered the cattle belonging to the natives; they established whole industries by collecting hops, cedar nuts et

cetera. In the steps of the traders followed the mound men or excavators of barrows (kur-gans) for the precious objects contained in them. Under the influence of searches for riches the Siberian pioneers became transformed into vagabonds and nomad adventurers, so that the Government had afterwards to make great efforts to bind them to the land.

A short history of the conquest of Siberia may be marked by the following facts. The first raids upon the Yugra, a Finnish tribe, one inhabiting the present government of Tobolsk, were already made in the twelfth century by enterprising traders from Novgorod, whom the Yugra attracted by their valuable peltry. These raids, be it observed, had no character of conquest but always ended with the taking of ransom in the form of costly furs. More definite relations of the Russians to the Siberian peoples began only with the sixteenth century, namely, with the time when Russia, after destroying the Tartar kingdoms of Kazan and Astrakhan, took possession of the whole extensive basin of the river Volga, whose branches brought pioneers of Russian colonization into the depths of the Urals, with its abundant mineral wealth. Passing over the easily traversed Ural chain, these pioneers were bound to come into conflict with Tartar tribes, inhabiting or wandering over the region across the Urals, and under the powerful hand and protection of Ivan the Terrible began gradually to subject them, at first to their influence, and then to their sovereignty.

In the year 1555 ambassadors came to the Tsar from Yediger and other Siberian princelings, oppressed by their southern co-tribesmen, praying to be accepted as his subjects, agreeing to the imposition of a tribute on condition that he should send them some of his people. The Tsar assented, but such allegiance was very unstable as Yediger hoped that the protection and help of the Tsar would restrain his enemies from attacking his possessions, but these expectations were not realized. Not receiving the desired protection and help, and as hard pressed as before by his hostile neighbours, he began to pay his tribute irregularly, and on the accession to the Khanate of Kuchum this tribute ceased altogether, and the Russians who came for it were not infrequently killed. The firm allegiance of Transuralia only came about in consequence of the movement of the Russian population undertaken with industrial and commercial objects towards the north-east.

A great importance in the history of this movement attaches to the family of the Stroganovs. The Russian princes possessing vast tracts of unsettled lands, very willingly assigned them temporarily to enterprising and rich people on the condition that they should settle them and cultivate the land, the said pioneers being afforded every possible privilege, such as freedom from taxes, trade unfettered by duties, and the right of administering justice to the settlers. The Stroganovs with their great wealth appear as the chief settlers of the great north-eastern tracts. In the reign of Ivan the IV, these rich manufacturers and traders penetrated into the depths of the river region of the Kama, and in 1558 petitioned the Tsar to grant them land along the Kama to the Chussovaya on condition that they should build a town there, develop industry, raise troops and defend the region from the attacks of wild hordes. It was difficult for the Government to defend the Kama region with its own forces, on account of its remoteness, and at the same time it was constantly being subjected to attacks and forcible devastations on the part of the Cisural and Transural tribes. Therefore, the proposition made by the Stroganovs seemed very advantageous; their prayer was granted, all

kinds of privileges were given them for 20 years, and the settlers bound themselves to build stockades and to maintain troops at their own expense. A few small towns quickly appeared on the spot, industry increased, the Russian population grew and established itself firmly in places till then unknown to it. Thus, the Stroganovs, thanks to their vast resources and their intrepidity, enterprise and energy, not only consolidated the Russian sovereignty in the Urals, but gave Russian settlers the possibility of passing over to the Eastern side of the mountain range so richly endowed by nature.

Ceaseless collisions with the natives and the striving to develop their industry over a wider territory induced the Stroganovs to beg the Tsar to authorize them to settle places on the other side of the Urals also. The brilliant example of the settlement of the Kama district had demonstrated to the Government the advantageousness of undertakings of this kind. The permission was given, and the Stroganovs bound themselves by the same conditions as before, and were even empowered to wage war not only of a defensive but of an offensive nature. For more extended offensive operations the Stroganovs could not at once find enough armed men, but these were not long forthcoming.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, a mass of people fled into Lithuania while not a few bent their steps into the waste regions forming the new acquisitions of Russia. There in those outlying regions the fugitives found liberty, ease and abundant space; whole bands were formed out of chance associates, who almost completely severed themselves from the State, paid but scant attention to the latter and lived their free Cossack life. But the Cossacks, engaged in robbery, harried also the territories which were under the authority of the Tsar, and were prosecuted by the Government for their brigandage. One of these parties of Don Cossacks, which had particularly distinguished itself by its freebooting expedition on the Volga, and which was being pursued by the Tsar's troops, proceeded under the leadership of its ataman Yermak Timofeev up the Kama and so reached the Stroganov possessions. The Stroganovs availed themselves of the opportunity and invited the Cossacks to enter their service. The latter consented and in a short time, equipped by the Stroganovs and with Yermak at their head, started across the Ural mountains and entered the limits of Kuchum's kingdom.

In 1580 Yermak was already on the banks of the Tura, defeated the Tartar princelet Yepancha, then took by storm the town of Shingi-Tura, upon whose site stands at the present time the town of Tiumen, and there took up his winter quarters. In the spring of the subsequent year Yermak moved on to the capital of Kuchum, the town of Isker or Siberia. Having navigated the Tura, Tobol and Irtych in barges, the Cossacks on October 26, 1581, reached the Khan's residence, and after a fierce fight took possession of it. Kuchum fled with the remains of his troops into the southern steppes. Yermak immediately sent his trusty lieutenant and ataman, Koltso, with the news of this conquest to Moscow, having furnished him with costly furs and commanded him «to humbly salute the Lord Ivan Vasilevich the Terrible with the acquisition of the new Siberian kingdom». The Tsar forgave Yermak his former faults, presented him with a cloak and medal, and sent the leader Glukhov to his assistance. Yermak Timofeev was however not long fated to rule Siberia. In 1584, enticed too far by the cunning of the Tartars, he perished together with his band in a fight upon

the banks of the Irtysh. In Moscow, meanwhile, nothing was known of the destruction of Yermak, and in 1586 arrived on the Tura a fresh reinforcement of 300 men under their leaders Sukin, Miasnov and Chulkov, who founded upon this river the town of Tiumen and thence began to spread the Russian authority over the Siberian natives. In 1587 yet another 500 troops were sent from Moscow into Siberia, and the order was given to build the Russian town of Tobolsk in the place of the ruined capital of Kuchum.

As soon as the Siberian kingdom was united to the Russian possessions the Government began to concern itself about the strengthening of the bond between the new possessions and the old. It could not have the extensive countries, seized by the Russians, deserted, and was compelled to move forth certain portions of its own population to create points of resistance, or so to say, cadres of the future natural colonization. Such points of resistance, founded beyond the Urals in the sixteenth century, were besides Tiumen and Tobolsk, Verkhoturie, Pelym, Beriozov, Surgut, Obdorsk, Narym, Ketsk and Tara. All these little towns served only as centres from which the conquerors were able to exploit the Siberian natives by means of collecting from them *y a s s a k* and trading with them in furs. In the seventeenth century the construction of rallying points continues, and Russian dominion rapidly extends further and further to the east. From the year 1604 the following strongholds were gradually built, out of which subsequently grew the towns of Tomsk, Turukhansk, Kuznetsk, Yeniseisk, Kansk, Krasnoyarsk, Yakutsk, Olekminsk, Achinsk, Barguzinsk, Irkutsk, Balagansk, Nerchinsk, Kirensk, and thus the Russian power was quickly extended over the basins of the three giant rivers of Siberia, the Obi, Yenissei and Lena. Between 1630 and 1640 Russian Cossack parties reached, on the one hand, the Arctic Ocean, and on the other, to the Sea of Okhotsk, and to this period belong their first attempts at sea voyages. In 1636 the Cossack Yellissei Buza was sent from Yenisseisk with the positive instruction to put to sea, and following along the coasts of the Arctic Ocean, to impose *y a s s a k* upon its inhabitants. Only in 1637 did Buza succeed in descending the Lena, coming out by its western arm upon the coast of the Arctic Ocean, and in making his way along it to the mouth of the Olenek. In the following year however, 1638, having built himself two vessels, called «Kocha», Buza sailed into the ocean by the eastern arm of the Lena and succeeded in reaching the mouth of the Yana. Almost at the same time Ivan Postnik reached the Yana and the more distant Inidighirka by land. In 1644 the Cossack Mikhaïl Stadukhin discovered the most eastern of the great rivers falling into the Arctic Ocean, the Kolyma, and there founded a winter station, subsequently transformed into Nizhni-Kolymsk.

From the extreme point of resistance at that time of the Russian dominion in the east, Kolymsk, a complete expedition was equipped in the year 1647 under the command of the Kholmogorsk emigrant, Fedot Alexeev and the Cossack Semion Dezhniev. In 1647 the expedition consisted of only four vessels; it reached the Chukotsk coast but did not succeed in penetrating further. On the other hand in the following year, 1648, an expedition of seven vessels with more than ten men on each vessel, under the leadership of Semion Dezhniev, Fedot Alexeev and Gerassim Ankundinov, was more fortunate. Quitting the Kolyma on the 30th of June, the intrepid sailors found the sea free from ice, and without meeting with any particular obstacles weathered the cape, called in recent times by Nordenskjold

Cape Dezhniev, sailed through the whole of the straits dividing Asia from America and subsequently called after Brend and gained the Chukotsk Cape. Here the expedition encountered a severe storm, during which Ankundinov's vessel perished, but his crew was distributed among the vessels of Dezhniev and Alexcev. On the 30th of September the Russians landed, but here had a skirmish with the Chukchis in which Fedot Alexcev was wounded. After this a frightful storm separated forever the vessels of Semion Dezhniev and Fedot Alexcev. Dezhniev bravely struggled in the open sea with storms and opposing winds, which bore him away to the south of the entry into the Anadyr bay, and finally he was cast upon the coast right beyond Cape Oliutor near the mouth of the river Oliutora, that is, upon the limits of Kamchatka between 61° and 60° N. L. From there Dezhniev and his twenty-five companions made their way to Anadyr where he founded a winter station, which afterwards became the Anadyr stronghold, as hither arrived soon after by land Russians under the command of Semion Motora from the Kolyma. Dezhniev himself returned to the Kolyma not earlier than 1653. In the meanwhile Fedot Alexcev parted from Dezhniev by the storm, according to information collected subsequently by the describer of Kamchatka, Krasheninnikov, traversed, it would seem, the whole of Kamchatka and perished on the river Tighila, that is, on the western shore of the peninsula.

Only in 1697 Kamchatka was discovered afresh and occupied by the Cossack Vladimir Atlasov, who starting from the Anadyr stronghold, destroyed four Koriak towns and having founded on the river Kamchatka the stockaded fort of Nizhni-Kamchatsk reduced the whole of Kamchatka.

At the same time the movement of the Russians towards the coast went its course in more southern latitudes. After the foundation on the middle course of the Lena of the Yakutsk fort by Peter Beketov, parties of Russians began to ascend the Aldan and to reach the Stanovoi range. It was by this road, passing the Stanovoi range, that the Cossack Ivan Moskovitin's party, sent in 1639 to impose *yassak* upon all the Tungus tribes, came out upon the river Ud and so reached the Sea of Okhotsk. After this, stockaded forts were founded at the mouths of the Ud and Tungura, and in 1643 the Russians for the first time appear upon the Amour. Equipped by the Yakutsk *voevode* the elder Vassili Poyarkov with 130 Cossacks ascended the rivers Aldan, Uchur and Gonam, crossed the Stanovoi range and then came out by the Brianda and Zeya upon the Amour and, descending the river, sailed into the Sea of Okhotsk. In 1647 the Cossack Shelkovnikov crossed from the mouths of the Amour to the mouth of the river Okhota and here founded the fort of Okhotsk.

But it was the Cossack elder Yerofei Khabarov who specially distinguished himself by his exploits upon the Amour. This intrepid Cossack who had formerly occupied himself at one time with corn growing, at another with salt boiling, undertook at his own costs to subjugate the Amour country. Having received the authorization from the Yakutsk *voevoda*, he in 1649 and 1650 reached the Amour by the rivers Olekma and Tunghir, destroyed a few Daur cities and having personally convinced himself of the natural riches of the country visited by him, hurriedly returned to Yakutsk in order to there excite interest and attention to the hitherto unknown country which was so remarkable in every respect. Having mustered a party of volunteers to the number of 150 men, and having received three guns from the

voevode, in 1651 he again made his appearance upon the banks of the Amour and stopped to winter in the station of Albazin founded by him. During two years notwithstanding the opposition of the Manchuro who surrounded him on every side he occupied the whole course of the Amour and reported his success to Yakutsk.

The rumour of the wealth of the river conquered by Khabarov quickly spread not only through the Siberian voevodeships but reached the Tsar himself, so that in 1654 Khabarov was recalled to Moscow to make a personal report upon the Amour, and the whole of his brave company was placed under the command of the Cossack Onufri Stepanov. This worthy successor of Khabarov closely pressed by the enemy, was obliged to fortify himself in the newly built Kamora stronghold and in 1655 withstood a severe siege at the hands of a numerous Manchur army. Later, after three years of obstinate struggle with the Manchurs, he fell in a skirmish in 1658.

Meanwhile, a road to the Amour was opened through Transbaikalia. The Yenisseisk voevoda Pashkov proposed to the Government, for the expeditious subjugation of the Amour, to select in the vicinity of the steppes a rallying point, where all the warlike force might be concentrated and whence it might undertake offensive movements. His plan was approved and an expedition to the Amour was entrusted to him; at the same time all the detachments along the Amour were ordered to place themselves under Pashkov's orders. This voevode then, from Yenisseisk, following the Upper Tunguzka, Baikal, the Selenga and the Khilka, reached the river Nerch, and at a distance of four versts from its mouth founded in 1658 the Nerchinsk stockaded fort. Here he wished to gather all the Amour bands which had been under the command of Stepanov, but as upon the death of the latter these parties scattered, Pashkov did not venture, with the miserable remnants of those who answered to his summons, to undertake any decisive operations and thus his expedition met with no success.

In 1665 a crowd of Russians under the leadership of Nikifor Chernigovski consisting of fugitive criminals, wishing to earn their pardon, appeared upon the ruins of Albazin, renewed the fortress there, began to collect yasak from the previous tributaries, the Tunguzes, and founded some strongholds. In 1677 the fort Verkhozeissk was built on the upper waters of the Zeya, followed by forts Selimbaevsk and Dodonsk. For almost 20 years Albazin enjoyed comparative tranquillity, but in 1685 the Manchur troops, with considerably superior forces, devastated the environs of Albazin and from the 12th of June of the same year commenced the celebrated siege of this town. The voevode Tolbuzin, with a body of 500 men pitched against a horde of 15,000 Manchurs, was obliged to surrender Albazin and retreat; but in the same year, reinforced by fresh troops that had come to his aid, he returned and built upon the site of the burnt wooden fortification an earthen entrenchment. The Manchurs observing the reestablishment of Albazin undertook a second siege in 1686, during which Tolbuzin was killed and his successor Afanasi Beiton stubbornly continued to hold his earthworks for a whole year, until at last in 1687 the exhausted Manchurs were themselves compelled to raise the siege. In 1688, a congress was appointed of the plenipotentiaries of the two warring sides, at which the Chinese gained a diplomatic victory. In August 27, 1689, the Nerchinsk treaty was signed, confirming the Amour to the Chinese, and for 160 years depriving the Russians of the possession of this outskirt of Siberia.

Only from the end of the seventeenth century when the boundaries of Siberia in the large sense of the term were already indicated more or less by the points of defense, could the actual permanent colonization be effected; the Government besides building cities and *yamas*, or posting stations, strove to create a class of peasant artisans and to spread corn growing. With this object, by command of the Tsar Feodor Alexeevich, volunteer ploughmen were sent from Solvychegodsk and other towns of the Permian of that time, who received besides every kind of privilege, agricultural implements and assistance in money. The road of the first settlements lay by the rivers Tura, Tavda, Tobol, Irtysh, Obi and their tributaries. The emigrants cut into the very heart of the native population; the Chudic tribes thrust back in the fifteenth century by the Tatars people, themselves pressed forward by the Mongolian movement and known by the general name of Tartars, remained in their places. From the south the greater part of the Tartars had wandered away further into the depths of the steppes, while the Ostyak and Samoyed tribes were moved back to the north and east.

The Government had to concern itself with the provisioning of the people it had settled, who required to be supplied with everything. Grain was imported from Perm, Viatka and Solvychegodsk. In consequence of the bad roads the furnishing of provisions was delayed, and hence Government servants suffered terrible want. The merchants occupied themselves with the furnishing of the colonists with goods. But trade relations of the new country with its metropolis Moscow were very difficult and were effected but once a year. Communications were accomplished by means of the rivers. The wares were transported on barges or plank levats. The Siberian sledges called «narta» were dragged over the portages by men. The merchants sometimes took up winter quarters on their way. The method of trading was slow and therefore only a few dealers penetrated into Siberia, but having reached there, from the absence of competition, became at once monopolists.

The spread of agriculture and the establishment of fixed settlements within the limits of the new country were supported by the sending out of ploughmen, post drivers, and with them girls to be married to the Cossacks, and also by the alleviation of the burdens imposed by the voevodes. By the care of the Government the growing of grain was spread not only among the Russian population but among the Tartars and Voguls of the present Tiumen and Turinsk districts. The agricultural population having dotted the country with villages formed the chief foundation of colonization in the east. It may be said that the true foundation of life in the region was laid when the conqueror's first grain of corn fell into the soil of the conquered countries.

Beginning with the end of the seventeenth century, this permanent colonization obtained in the eighteenth a more regular form. The Government, settling the unoccupied spots, at the same time took care to secure them from the raids of the nomads, who had been driven back into the steppe regions of Central Asia, and which were so frequent and so destructive to the young colonies. Such raids indeed arrested the development of agricultural settlements in Siberia and Zavolzhia not only in the end of the seventeenth but also in the first half of the eighteenth century. To protect the colonization as yet not firmly established, the fortresses of Omsk, Yamyshevsk and Petropavlovsk were built, as well as among others the towns of Biysk, Semipalatinsk and Ust-Kamenogorsk.



As at the very beginning of Russia's acquaintance with Siberia the enterprise of private persons had a great significance in the movement of the Russians eastward, so in the beginning of the eighteenth century no slight services were rendered the Government by the rich trader Akinfi Demidov. In 1723 his parties penetrated, with trading and industrial objects in the Altai mountains to Mount Siniukha near lake Kolyvans, and here found Chudie mines and traces of ores. In 1726 artisans and clerks were sent here by Demidov from his Nevian works in the Urals, and on the small stream of the Loktevka falling into the Allei was built the first works, called Kolyvansk. Soon other mines were discovered in the neighbourhood of whose existence Demidov presented a report to the Government and by an ukaz of the year 1747 the works of Kolyvansk and Voskresensk were taken over from Demidov by the Crown.

With the development of mining in the Ural, Altai and at the Nerchinsk works, there was required an increased number of workmen. To meet this demand hundreds of families were sent forth from the interior of Russia to the works and attached to the latter, and in this way the Russian population of Siberia grew every year.

To unite the limits of conquest already indicated by stockades and fortresses to intermediate points as also for the defense of the mining works from the raids of nomads, the tracts or main routes were settled, and Cossack defense posts and settlements established. In 1744 to 1745 the tract between Toholsk and Tara was so inhabited, followed by those between Ishim and Omsk, and the Chauss stockade and Tomsk. In 1762 to 1780 the tract between Tara and the Chauss stockade was settled, and in 1763 the Ekaterinburg road was built. Among the Cossack defense lines in 1720 to 1773 was constructed that of the Irtysh, in 1755 that between Omsk and Zverinogolovsk. Further, with the movement of colonization into the depths of the Altai, the Kolyvan-Kusnetsk, Novokolyvan-Kusnetsk, and in 1780 the Bukhtarminsk lines.

Parallel to the colonization patronized by the Government, at times during the critical moments in Russia's historical and economical life, another kind of colonization, namely, secret colonization was effected.

The government of Tobolsk, as the first zone lying on the road to the little known country, was more thickly populated with fugitives belonging to those groups of the population of European Russia who were there faring ill. In Siberia these fugitives under the protection of dense forests and swamps raised their solitary dwellings, made so-called «zaimkas» or enclosures, cleared forests and introduced tillage. The voevodes on discovering such settlements did not destroy them but only levied upon them state taxes. Such emigrants, settling and at the same time securing the possession of an alien region, were not without their advantages to the voevodes. Thus the acceptance with an amnesty of the allegiance of the so-called Bukhtarmin masons, the fugitive families of dissenters and criminals who had taken up their abodes beyond the Kamen, one of the ridges of the Altai, spread the dominion of Russia to one of the best valleys of the Altai.

With the extension of the settlements the people became acquainted with the surrounding spots and finding more convenient places, built themselves new outlying hamlets and suburbs. Each settled upon a separate patch over which he had arbitrary control; when, however, he did not wish to remain any longer in the same place, he handed over his land to another and sought a new home.

Such secret colonization at times attained fairly considerable dimensions, so that the State authority had to take severe measures to stop this undesirable movement.

Together with the settlement of Siberia in the course of the eighteenth century appeared the necessity for its exploration. The Emperor Peter the Great becomes the initiator in this matter, as in everything else. Recognizing that the attempts to establish regular sea communication with Kamchatka in place of the distant and circuitous road through the northern tundras, did not succeed, from the inability to build ships, he sent on this account Swedish prisoners acquainted with ship building to Okhotsk. On a ship built by Henry Busch the first attempt was made in 1716, and in 1717 took place the perfectly successful voyage of the Cossack Sokolov, after which regular communication between Okhotsk and Kamchatka was established. Next, Peter the Great was interested in the question of whether there is a passage into the Arctic Ocean between the Asiatic and American continents, the solution of this question by the voyage of Dezhniev being unknown to the Emperor. He equipped for the purpose of deciding this question a great Northern Expedition, under the command of the Danish sailor in the Russian service, Vitus Berend, Lieutenant Shpanberg and Alexei Chirikov. The expedition started from St. Petersburg in the year of Peter the Great's death, 1725, and only after three years reached Kamchatka through Siberia. Berend sailed out into the sea from Nizhni-Kamchatsk on the 31st of July, 1728, on the 19th of August, approached the Chukot peninsula under  $64^{\circ} 30'$  N. L., on the 21st of August discovered the island of St. Lawrence and on the 26th of August saw under  $67^{\circ} 18'$  N. L. the north-eastern extremity of Asia, Cape Dezhniev, and considering the question of the existence of a strait between Asia and America completely solved, returned to Nizhni-Kamchatsk. Berend's successful voyage did not remain without consequences.

The Russians commenced a whole series of attempts with the object of exploring the coasts of the Arctic Ocean and thus discovering a passage through it to America. In 1739 the expedition of Lieutenant Pronchishev fitted out for the Lena had imposed upon it the problem of exploring the seacoast between the mouths of the Lena and the Yenissei. But the expedition only succeeded in getting as far as the mouth of the Olenek and Pronchishev himself and his wife died on the desert shore of the ocean. The expedition of Lieutenant Laptev, which followed next, succeeded in reaching the Taimir peninsula, namely, to Cape St. Thaddeus, but was not able to weather Cape Cheliuskin and Laptev's companion, Cheliuskin, was obliged to survey it only from the land side. At the same time, that is, in 1739 to 1740, Lieutenant Dmitri Laptev was commissioned to describe the littoral to the east of the mouth of the Lena. Only after these two years efforts did Laptev, passing by the Medviezhi Islands, reach Cape Baranov, but was unable to make the passage into Behring Strait.

From 1733 to 1743 belongs the remarkable scientific land expedition fitted out to explore the whole of Siberia under the guidance of the best men of science of the time, the naturalist Gmelin, subsequently author of the first Siberian Flora, and the historian Müller, the author of the History of Siberia. Into the composition of this remarkable scientific expedition entered also the astronomer Delille, Professor Fisher, assistant Steller, several students and geodesists. The expedition returned from Yakutsk, but Delille, Steller and the student Krasheninnikov

reached Kamchatka. Delille and Steller formed part of the second Berend expedition, equipped by the Government in 1740, which on this occasion had for its principal object the problem of exploring the north-western shore of America. Berend and Chirikov commanded the two vessels of the expedition. On the 15th of June, 1741, both vessels left Petropavlovsk for Kamchatka, but on the first of July a storm separated them. Berend reached the American shore between 68° and 69°, in view of the marvellous giant volcano of St. Elias. Then after a long and tiring voyage along the line of the Alleutian islands, Berend, sick and tortured by his voyage over the stormy sea, suffered shipwreck on the 5th of November at an island called subsequently by his name, and died after having landed, on the shore of the island. Lieutenant Waxel and Steller, having built a new ship from the fragments of the old, returned to Kamchatka after fourteen months voyage. Chirikov's vessel reached America much further to the south, under 56° N. L., that is, opposite the island Sitkha; but having lost two of his boats with their crews, destroyed by the natives on landing, sailed along the American coast, not putting to land anywhere, and with frightful losses from scurvy to which Delille fell a victim, returned to Kamchatka. The best result of the expedition were the splendid observations of Steller, who with Krashennnikov composed the first descriptions of Kamchatka. But the practical results of Berend and Chirikov's expedition were the gradual discovery and occupation by the Russians of the north-western part of the American Continent. Thus, in 1743 the Russian trader Bassov already wintered upon Behring Island, and from 1745 to 1764 all the Alleutian islands were discovered and occupied. Much greater success attended the expeditions of Captain Shpanberg and Lieutenant Walton in 1738, 1739 and 1742, from Okhotsk to Japan and the Kuril islands.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, during the reign of the Empress Catherine II, began a new and brilliant era in the history of the geographical and scientific explorations of Siberia. The Yakutsk merchant Shalaurov, one of the prominent local Siberians, having equipped at his own cost a sea expedition, having for its object the passage into Behring sea from the mouth of the Lena, doubled in 1761 the Holy Noss and discovered the neighbouring island of Liakhov one of the new Siberian group. In the course, however, of the three years, 1761 to 1763, he was unable to penetrate to the east further than Cape Shelag, upon which he met his death during his second expedition undertaken in 1766. At the same time in consequence of the indications of the existence of lands in the Arctic Ocean, which had been known from the times of Dezhniev, attempts were made to reach these lands in winter on sledges over the ice. One of such successful attempts was the journey of Sergeant Andreev, who discovered in 1763 a whole group of islands upon which he found traces of former habitation by people acquainted only with the use of stone implements and unfamiliar with the metals. This group of islands in the opinion of Nordenskjöld was Wrangel land. In 1770 the discoveries of the Russians touched the group of the New Siberian islands. In that year Liakhov not only investigated the island subsequently called by his name, but went as far as Kotel island.

The particular attention of the enlightened Government of the Empress Catherine was directed to the scientific exploration of the southern colonizational zone of Siberia. Among the expeditions which marked an epoch in geographical science, equipped by the Academy of

Sciences at the desire of the Empress Catherine II, for the many-sided investigation of the little known parts of the Empire, the expeditions into Siberia, accomplished in 1770 to 1774 by the Academicians Pallas and Lepekhin, take almost the first place on account of their scientific value.

The attention of the Empress was also directed to the extreme east with its Behring Sea and north-western corner of America. The expedition fitted out by the Government in 1768 to 1769 under Captain Krinitzin and Lieutenant Levashov, visited the Alleutian islands and gained Alaska. In 1789 the trader Pribylov discovered the island, called by his name, and it has since become the centre of the sealing and whaling trade in Behring Sea. From 1790 to 1794 Captain Billings and Lieutenant Sarychev's expedition quickly regulated the developing and too rapacious fishing of the Behring Sea. In 1792 a private company, consisting of Deliarov, Shelekhov and Golikov founded the Russian settlement in Paul harbour upon Kadiak island, and in 1796 Novoarkhangelsk, on the island of Sitkha, upon which Russian authority was firmly established by Baranov, only in 1799. Similar permanent settlements arose also upon several of the Alleutian and Commandor islands and even upon the peninsula of Alaska, then consisting of the Alleutians.

In 1799 a great company was organized in St. Petersburg under the name of the Russian American Company with the object of working the Russian possessions upon the American Continent, as also the shores and islands of Behring Sea and of the Sea of Okhotsk. The company was granted very ample privileges, to secure which the Government recognized it as necessary to conclude a convention with the United States in 1820, and with Great Britain in 1825. The term of the privileges was originally fixed for twenty years but it was subsequently several times renewed, so that the Russ-American Company continued to exist till 1867 and was compelled to liquidate its affairs only in consequence of the surrender of the Russian American possessions with the Pribylov's islands to the Government of the United States. The Emperor, as is said in the treaty concluded on this subject on the 3rd of May, 1867, wishing to cement the good understanding existing with the Government of the United States, surrendered to the latter the whole territory with the sovereign rights thereto, then held by His Majesty on the American Continent, as also the adjacent islands.

Simultaneously therewith arose the question of the inconveniences of joint dominion over Sakhalin with Japan, and wishing to put an end to misunderstandings which arose in reference to this subject, it was recognized as advantageous to enter in 1875 into an agreement with Japan. The result of this agreement was the conclusion of the treaty with Japan of the 25th of April, 1875, upon the mutual surrender on the part of Russia of the group of the Kuril islands and on the part of Japan of the island of Sakhalin or Kraits. From this time the whole island of Sakhalin came under the sway of the Russian sceptre.

With the nineteenth century, when a complete administration and civil government was formed in Siberia, it became extremely difficult to wander freely over the country or to conceal oneself. The passport system and the prohibition of founding settlements or villages, without authorization fettered the emigrational movements, keeping them within narrower limits. But on the other hand, when the Government opened an issue to colonization it poured in like a wide torrent.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, as in the eighteenth, much attention was directed by both the Russian Government, and by Russian men of science, to the exploration of Siberia from both a geographical and scientific point of view. In the Arctic Ocean, Sannikov in 1805 discovered in the New Siberian group, the Stolbovoi island, and Bielkov, the Bielkov island and New Siberia. In 1809 to 1810 the first scientific expedition was undertaken for the exploration of the New Siberian islands, by order of the Chancellor Count Rumiantsev under the leadership of Hedenstrom. In 1821 to 1824, expeditions for their exploration were fitted out under the command of the best Russian navigators in two parts of the Arctic Ocean, situated wide apart from each other. One of them under the command of the energetic sailor Littke, subsequently Count and Vice President of the Russian Geographical Society, attempted during four successive years to reach the Siberian Frozen Ocean, at one time trying to double Nova Zembla, at another striving to force its way into the Kara sea through the Kara gates, but without success. Extremely valuable investigations, on account of their scientific results, were carried out at the same time by the expeditions under Captain Wrangel and Lieutenant Anjou in the eastern part of the Siberian Frozen Ocean, between the mouths of the Lena and Kolyma. Behring Sea was also circumstantially explored by the two celebrated Russian navigators Kotsebu, 1815 to 1818, and Littke, 1826 to 1829.

The Russian Government was still more concerned about the exploration of the southern area of colonization. The expedition of Ledebur, Meier and Bunge in 1826 made an excellent investigation of the peculiar and interesting flora of the Altai and the expedition under Humboldt, Rose and Ehrenberg, fitted out by the Emperor Nicholas I, did the same for the geological formation of the Altai tableland. Local men of science also and observers did much for the sciences in Siberia. In the beginning of the thirties, Dr. Gebler in the Altai and Turchaninov in Circumbaikalia made excellent studies, one of the entomology and the other of the flora. The Altai, town of Barnaoul, the centre of the government of the Altai mining district, due to the solid scientific foundation of the mining engineers living there, became one of the three principal centres of culture of Siberia, thanks to which the metalliferous position of the Altai was well explored in geological respects. Between 1842 and 1845 two important scientific journeys were undertaken into Siberia, that of Peter Chikhachov, into the least accessible parts of the Altai, and that of Middendorf, to two little known and little explored outskirts of Siberia, the Taimir peninsula in the extreme north, and the coast of the Okhotsk Sea as far as the Shantar islands. Middendorf reached the latter region by following the southern slope of the Stanovoi range, which became a Russian possession only subsequently, namely in the early years of the second half of the nineteenth century, in consequence of the annexation to Russia of the whole Amour tract.

This great achievement in the history of Siberia owed its accomplishment to the extraordinary energy of the then Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, Muraviov, afterwards known as Count Muraviov Amursky. Immediately on his arrival in the region committed to his care, Muraviov clearly perceived that Eastern Siberia with its vast region of Yakutsk, quite unfitted to permanent settlement, had very small prospect in the future, without the gigantic and sole river in Siberia, flowing its whole course from west to east, which leads to a sea not eternally closed by ice. To seize the whole course of this river was the task which Muraviov

firmly and carefully set himself about when he began the administration of the country entrusted to him. The first step for the attainment of this object was to avail himself of the transport «Baikal», sent by the Government already in 1848 to carry cargoes from the Naval Department to Petropavlovsk under the command of Captain Nevelskoy. He accordingly imposed upon this sturdy and enterprising sailor the discovery and exploration of the mouth of the Amour. Having received but an authorization, limited by various conditions, Muraviov found in Nevelskoy an excellent performer of his plans. Nevelskoy having landed his cargo in Petropavlovsk on the 31st of May, 1849, started with the transport Baikal for the eastern shore of Sakhalin, thence to begin his explorations. He doubled the northern extremity of the island, entered the bay of Obman, called it after the name of his transport, and making further investigations on the 28th of June, entered the frith of the Amour. He soon found the mouth of the river. A few days afterwards Nevelskoy entered the straits between the Continent and the western shore of Sakhalin at the Capes called by him Lazarev and Muraviov. Thus, contrary to the opinions of La Perouse, Krusenstjern and others, Sakhalin proved to be an island. After forty-five vain efforts to enter with the transport Baikal the mouth of the Amour, he turned back northwards into the sea of Okhotsk.

From this time the question of the annexation of the Amour obtained more serious significance in Government spheres. In 1850 the Amour expedition was formed, having for its chief object the foundation upon the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk near the frith of the Amour, at a point for the establishment of relations and trade with the Giliaks, and Nevelskoy was appointed commander of the Amour expedition. On the 29th of June he founded in Fortune Bay the Peter winter station, and in August he first hoisted on the shores of the Amour the Russian military flag, declared to the Giliaks that they were coming under Russian protection and founded at this point, twenty-five versts from the mouth the post of Nikolaevsk. Between 1851 and 1853 were founded the posts of Ilinsk at the mouth of the river Kusunaya, Alexandrovsk in the bay of De Castri and Mariinsk near lake Kizi.

In 1854, thanks to his repeated requests and perseverance, Muraviov received the Imperial authorization to «navigate the Amour». The Chinese government was warned of the intended first voyage on the river and without waiting for any answer from it, the small but powerful flotilla under the command of the Governor-General himself solemnly took the waters of the Amour on the 18th of May, descending to this river from the Shilka. On the 14th of June the expedition already reached the pool of Mariinsk, and thus the road was opened from the Russian upper waters of the Amour to the lower reaches of this great river only just occupied by the Russians.

The success of this first expedition marks an important epoch in the history of Siberia. The convenience and possibility of the settlement of the shores of the Amour, on account of the sparsely inhabited condition of the country, the peaceable character of the natives and the weakness of the Chinese, were demonstrated. The importance of the acquisition of the Amour was proved also by the fact that thanks to the sending in good time of provisions and arms to Kamchatka the port of Petropavlovsk was saved. Near this port the Anglo-French fleet stood in Avvachinsk bay with distinctly hostile intentions, and even opened fire upon the fortifications. Attempts of a similar nature were made in the following year but also without success.

In 1855 Governor-General Mouraviov laid upon his successor General Korsakov the task of the immediate and rapid realization of a Russian colonization along the course of the Amour. Emigrants were invited from the governments of Irkutsk and Zabaikal and owing to the numerous advantages offered in the form of liberation from military service, State provision for two years and the supply of agricultural implements, the number of applicants proved far greater than was at first thought necessary.

The flow of emigrants and arms continued during the following years, notwithstanding the expressed dissatisfaction of the Chinese authorities and in the meanwhile the diplomatic negotiations led to no results, due to the voluntary dilatoriness of the Chinese officials.

At length a project of a treaty was composed at Aigun in 1857 and handed to the consideration of the Chinese Government. In order to reserve himself the higher authority in the case of any misunderstanding General Mouraviov entrusted the ultimate direction of the negotiations to Perovski and thanks to the firmness of the latter the treaty was signed on the 16th day of May. The left banks of the Amour from Argun to the mouth were ceded to Russia and the right banks as far as the Ussuri, to China; only Russian and Chinese vessels were allowed to navigate the Amour, Sungari and Ussuri; the Mandzhurian inhabitants of the left banks of the Amour, from the river Zei on the south to the village of Harmandzin were to remain in their former places of habitation, under the rule of a Mandzhurian governor, there was to be free trade along all three rivers. These were the conditions of the Aigun treaty.

In order to enjoy the full advantages of this treaty it was necessary to colonize the province of the Amour; to cultivate a Russian population in it and to open a steam navigation along the Amour. And hence the Government came to the conclusion that it was necessary to institute an obligatory Cossack colonization of the Amour, Ussuri, and of all the region of the Ussuri. In 1858 Cossack stations were established along the left banks of the river from the beginning of the Little Hingan mountain range to the mouth of the Ussuri, and a Cossack colony was founded at the junction of the latter with the Amour, named after the first conqueror of the Amour, Khabarovski; this was followed by the colony of Blagoveschensk at the mouth of the Zei, of Sophisk and others. And in this manner the Russian rule over the vast region of the Amour, was ultimately established. In 1860 there were already as many as twelve thousand colonists of both sexes in the province of the Amour and there were 61 Cossack stations. In the same year Count Ignatiev after prolonged negotiations with the Chinese Government succeeded in concluding the Peking treaty by which the Chinese Government ultimately recognized the Russian rule over the river Amour and the entire region of the Ussuri. This treaty also confirmed all the points of the Aigun treaty and of the Tientsin treaty previously made by Count Putiatin with the Chinese.

The occupation of the Amour was followed by a scientific survey of the Amour-Littoral region. This was inaugurated by the Russian Geographical Society, which in 1858 had opened an Eastern Siberian branch at Irkutsk. In 1854 the Society equipped its great Siberian expedition for the exploration of the regions of the Baikal, and especially of the Amour Littoral province. This expedition included the astronomer Schwartz, naturalist Raddey, geologist Schmidt, the envoy of the Eastern Siberian branch, R. Maack, and also the envoy

of the Academy of Sciences, Shrenk, zoologist, who was sent at the initiative of the Grand Duke Constantin, then President of the Academy, and lastly the envoy of the Botanical Gardens, Maximov, botanist. This expedition rendered incalculable service to the scientific knowledge of the region. The Eastern Siberian branch which subsequently became the most prominent local centre of culture in Eastern Siberia and its frontiers did not cease its useful activity, and at a later period the district was explored in all parts by local scientists sent under the protection of the Society and at its expense. Among these explorers mention may be made of Chekanovski, Dybovski, Potanin, Yadrintsev, Kropotkin, Cherski, Ditmar, Korzhinski and many others.

In general, during the last thirty years, an independent effort is already observable on the part of the local Siberian magnates to investigate the productive powers of their vast country. Among those persons who have enriched themselves by a prudent exploitation of the natural wealth of Siberia there are many who have shown themselves the patrons of every scientific exploration and daring enterprise which could bring advantage to Siberia. Some of these persons, like A. M. Sibiriakov and M. K. Sidorov have spared neither labour nor money for the exploration and discovery of a sea route to the mouths of the Siberian rivers, while others like I. M. Sibiriakov and Iukachev have spared no expense for the support and even equipment of scientific expeditions to the little known Siberian outlying provinces and adjacent parts of Central Asia, to the exploration of which the Russian Geographical Society has given particular attention.

During the last twenty-five years not only Russian, but also Scandinavian, English and American navigators, have been greatly attracted by the question of the investigation of the climatic conditions of the Arctic Ocean with the object of establishing a regular sea route to the mouths of the great Siberian rivers. As early as 1868 and 1869 the first successful endeavours to penetrate into the Kara sea were made by Swedish traders. The most convenient time of year for this was found to be the early autumn, when the Kara sea is most free from ice. Nordenskjöld's scientific expedition in 1875 showed that the mouth of the Yenissei is accessible in autumn, naturally for a very short time, and with the exception of particularly unfavourable years; and that for trading purposes it would be necessary to erect warehouses at the mouth of the river where the unloading and loading of the vessels could be effected in a few days. In 1873 to 1879 Nordenskjöld's famous expedition was equipped with the active cooperation of the Siberian magnate Sibiriakov. This expedition was the first to succeed in navigating along the entire Siberian coast and passing through the Behring straits into the Pacific Ocean. This expedition which extended over a space of two years, was naturally a triumph to science, but as yet it only proved, that although it is possible under particularly favourable circumstances to navigate through the Arctic Ocean along the entire Siberian coast, even in one year, yet with the exception of the above mentioned access to the mouth of the Yenissei, this coast cannot serve for regular maritime or mercantile relations. The heroic endeavours of the last American expedition under Captain Long, whose vessel the «Jeanetta» was lost on the coast of the Novo-Sibirsk islands and the survivors only saved after the death of Captain Long by Russians at the mouth of the Lena in 1881, proved the same truth. In the meantime the climatic conditions of the entire Arctic Ocean have now been



considerably enlightened by a large international enterprise, namely by the simultaneous observations of a series of polar meteorological stations erected in 1883 to 1884 on a common plan, with the consent of many Powers along the shores of the Arctic Ocean. Two of these stations were erected by the Russian Geographical Society, one at the mouth of the Lena, the other at Nova Zembla. The Russian Academy of Sciences also took advantage of the staff of the Lena observatory, for a new scientific exploration of the Novo-Sibirsk islands in 1885 under Bunghe and Baron Toll.

The opening of the Tomsk University in 1888, thanks to the large donations of the Siberian magnates, A. M. Sibiriakov and Tsibulski, made Tomsk a third centre of culture within Siberia proper and greatly aids the direction and development of the young scientific forces in the depths of Siberia.

The Russian rule has also gradually advanced into the depths of Asia on the other frontier opposite the Arctic Ocean, namely the Kirghiz steppes. This movement was started as early as 1731 by the acceptance of the Little Kirghiz Horde into the Russian rule. The fall of the Dzhungar kingdom to the Chinese in 1769 deprived the Kirghiz Kaissacks of a firm ally and obliged them to ultimately gravitate towards Russia. The daring and clever Khan of the Central Kirghiz Horde, Albai, managed to preserve the nominal independence of his people by artfully playing between China and Russia. But after his death in 1781, the feeble character of his successor Bali-Khan and the constant disputes among the different Kirghiz tribes and hordes resulted in one tribe after another seeking salvation from the oppression of its neighbours by submitting to the sway and powerful protection of Russia. These neighbouring tribes, placed, as it were, between the hammer and the anvil, between the plundering onslaughts of their still independent neighbours, on the one hand, and the Russian protection of its already subjected tribes on the other, sought the Russia rule, one after another. Such a gradual subjection of the Kirghiz steppes obliged the Russian Government to advance its foreposts far beyond the Irtysh into the depths of the Kirghiz steppes.

Between 1824 and 1834 the first Russian settlements were founded in the steppes of the Kirghiz of the Siberian department; the number of these settlements afterwards increased, but between 1836 and 1847 the successes of the Russian rule over the Kirghiz steppes, were hindered by a ten years struggle with the energetic grandson of Khan Ablai, the sultan Kenissara, who succeeded during ten years to play between the two neighbouring Russian Governor-Generals, on the one hand, and the independent Turkestan rulers on the other, until at last he fell in an insignificant dispute at the hands of his nomadic neighbours, the Karakirghiz, in 1847. Unfortunately the Russian settlements in the country of the Central horde were founded in places quite unfit for a settled agricultural life, for example, Bayan-Aoul, Karkarala, Akmolinsk, Atbassar et cetera, and could not therefore serve as points of support for the Russian control over the steppes of the Kirghiz limits of Siberia. But as soon as the beginning of the forties the explorations made by Russian naturalists and geologists, such as Karelin, Kirilov, A. Shrenk and Vlangali, showed that not all of the country is unfitted for settlement, but that on the contrary, at the foot of the Tarbagataia and Semirechinsk Altai, there are excellent and convenient lands for agriculture and colonization. Since the subjection in 1847 of the Great Kirghiz horde, whose lands were situated along the beautiful and fertile slopes of the Semi-

rechinsk and Zaïliisk Altai, it was found possible to start a settled and agricultural colonization in the south-east corner of the Kirghiz lands. Thus in 1847 the town of Kopal was built at the foot of the Semirechinsk Altai, and in 1854 the fort of Verneie on the slopes of the Zaïliisk Altai, and subsequently, a whole series of considerable settlements were founded along the foot of this mountain chain.

The occupation of the Zaïliisk slopes was of similar importance in the history of Asiatic Russia to that of settling the region of the Amour. As soon as Russian colonization had set a firm foot in this frontier land of Central Asia, the pioneers of Russian science precipitated themselves thither. In 1855 to 1857 and the following years, the Russian Geographical Society equipped its first expedition under the direction of its Vice-President Semenov to this region, and subsequently used every endeavour for a scientific exploration of not only this region, but taking it as a starting point, for a gradual exploitation of the natural treasures of the interior of Asia. The names of the most active agents of the Russian Geographical Society are connected with the exploration of this region of Siberia and of the adjacent countries of Central Asia. After Semenov's expedition, Severtsov, Veniukov, Baron Osten-Sacken, Moushketov, Romanov, Przhevalski, Potanin, Beresovski, Pevtsov, Gromchevski, the brothers Groom-Grzhimailo, Krasnov, Bogdanovich, Obruchev and Roborovski appear as the pioneers of science not only in this region but in the depths of the Asiatic deserts and their oases and hills. In the interim Verneie, with its excellently colonized area, not only became the lever point of Russian influence over the neighbouring nomadic tribes, which soon voluntarily subjected themselves to Russia, but it also succeeded in binding such a knot of relations with the long settled rulers of Turan as could never have been done from the distant Orenburg.

In the meanwhile, in 1858, the fort of Perovsk was erected on the lowlands of the Syr-Daria on the spot taken from the Kokand tribe of Ak-mechoti and a line of outposts established along the Syr-Daria from Perovsk to Kasalinsk. At the end of the fifties the Russian Government gradually came to the conclusion of the necessity of advancing the frontier to include the tribes which had gone over to Russian rule, and of entirely subjecting the Kirghiz hordes far into the Kirghiz steppes, with the kingdoms of Turkestan, and of occupying the slopes of the mountain chain limiting the upper course of the Syr-Daria on the north between the meridians of the already occupied limits of lake Issyk-Kule and fort Perovsk. This occupation which was begun by Colonel Tsimmermann in 1860, and realized by Colonel Cherniaev in 1864, resulted in the subjection of Tashkend, gradually brought the whole of Turkestan under Russian rule and was completed in 1881 by the occupation of the present Transcaspian province to the very frontiers of Persia and Afghanistan and the laying down of the Transcaspian Railway.

The colonization of Siberia proper has followed its natural course. The emigration movement was very strong before the Crimean campaign; then in 1855 it decreased, but after the close of the campaign it again increased. Before 1861 at the time of the liberation of the serfs the number of emigrants again began to decrease, but after the liberation it attained the largest dimensions. From the time of their liberation the peasant population increased in a manner unprecedented in the present century; so that evident signs of an over population evinced themselves in many parishes and even districts of Russia, and emigration on a large

scale appeared as a natural necessity. Between 1860 and 1880 the emigration into the two western Siberian governments was estimated at 60,000 souls, and if the eastern governments and the Semirechinsk province be included, then the number during that period may be taken as about 110,000 souls. The emigration returns for recent years show that during the six years between 1879 and 1885 over 55,000 people passed into Siberia. Last year, 1892, after the famine in European Russia, about ninety thousand were registered at Tiumen. The emigration to the Altai mining district was particularly strong, and between 1884 and 1889 about 95,500 emigrants settled there.

Since 1861 the emigrants to the Amour and Littoral provinces are given special advantages, which with certain modifications are in force to the present day and consist in the following: Crown land to the amount of not over 100 dessiatines per family is allotted to each family or company under the condition of a free use of this land for the first twenty years, with the right of buying it, or after the lapse of these twenty years, of paying a rent fixed by the State. In those cases where the emigrant may desire to acquire more land than that allotted to a family, it can immediately do so by paying three roubles per dessiatine. And in general this is the price fixed for the purchase of land in the districts assigned by the Government for emigration, the pioneer being given the choice of his place of settlement. Being freed from the payment of taxes and State service for twenty years the settlers were freed from military service for ten years, and from the payment of rural taxes for three years. These advantages attracted settlers to the Amour and they gravitated through the whole of Siberia to Blagoveschensk and the valleys of the rivers Zei and Bourrei. In 1883 the Government started the peopling of the south Ussuri region, whither the peasants of European Russia were transported at the expense of the Government by steamer from Odessa through the Suez canal. The result of a three years trial was the settlement of over 4,500 souls in this region, at a cost of over a million roubles to the State. Emigrants to this region were also allowed to settle at their own expense, with the condition that each family should have a capital of not less than 600 roubles, beyond the travelling expenses, for starting farming in the new locality; and should they desire to enlarge their farms, they were given advances of 600 roubles per family for a period of 33 years.

In speaking of the colonization of Siberia it is necessary to mention also the sending of criminals into that region. It is generally thought that such transportation forms one of the modes of colonizing a country, but this is hardly the case. The distribution of the exiles in the different governments and regions is extremely uneven. In certain localities they are crowded to the extreme, for instance, in the Kainsk and Marinsk districts of the government of Tomsk, they form almost one-sixth of the population, while in other districts and even provinces there are none, such as for example at Semipalatinsk, Kamchatka, the region of Okhotsk, and province of Akmolinsk. There are no accurate data respecting the increase of exiles through marriage, but judging from the reasons which hinder the multiplication of the exiles it may be concluded that this increase is very insignificant. The people transported for criminal offences are in the majority of cases single, husbands without their wives, wives without their husbands; and as, moreover, the number of males exiled into Siberia is ten times that of the females, the married couples made between the criminals must be compar-

atively small; besides this the indisposition of the vagabond exiles to a domestic life and of the natives to enter into marriage with the criminals and the predominance of prostitution, sickness, siphilis et cetera, among the exiled population, all this combines to prevent the multiplication of the exiled settlers and to paralyze it.

This historical sketch of the conquest and colonizatón of the vast area known under the general name of Siberia comes down almost to the present time. When during the second half of the present century it was discovered that the population was fast outgrowing its territory then colonization became one of the most important problems of the State. And thus it is that the Government has resolved to come to the aid of the national movement, and to regulate it by a series of measures. The matter was begun by the law of 1889, respecting the voluntary emigration of peasants and burghers to State lands where they previously had not the right of settlement. According to this law the Ministry of State Domains forms special allotments on the State lands for settlers and communicates concerning them to the Ministry of the Interior, who after investigating the local position of the families desirous of emigrating includes those which satisfy the necessary conditions in the emigration list and excludes those which are deemed unfitted. Emigration was also allowed to the south-western Siberian provinces peopled by the Kirghiz, and where Russians were not previously admitted, and in 1892 this permission was extended to the two governments of Eastern Siberia, those of Yenisseisk and Irkutsk.

The result of this emigration movement to Siberia was the settlement of Russian emigrants over the whole of the narrow southern band extending from the Urals over Western and Eastern Siberia proper and beyond the Baikal over the basin of the Amour to the Sea of Japan. And this is why, during the last ten years, the necessity of uniting all this extensive and in parts even, interrupted colonized area of Siberia by an uninterrupted railroad has become more and more evident both in Russia and Siberia. But the question of the construction of this line only came to the fore after the memorable journey of the Heir Apparent through the whole of Siberia. On his return to Russia from his long journey to the East, His Imperial Highness landed on Russian territory at Vladivostok, on the 11th of May, 1891, and read there the immemorial Imperial rescript of the 17th of March, 1891, published at St. Petersburg in the name of His Imperial Highness the Tsarevich and Grand Duke Nicolai Alexandrovich.

«Having now commanded the immediate construction of a railroad through the entire length of Siberia with the object of connecting these richly endowed provinces of Siberia with the internal network of railways, I commission you to announce such as my will on your return to the Russian territory after having visited the foreign lands of the East. At the same time I lay upon you the act of inaugurating the construction, at the expense of the Crown, of the Ussuri section of the Grand Siberian Railway at Vladivostok.

«May your auspicious participation in the inauguration of this truly national work which I have undertaken, serve as a fresh witness of my heartfelt desire to facilitate the relations between Siberia and the other portions of the Empire, and in such wise make known to this region, which is so dear to my heart, my liveliest care for its pacific progress».

This decided the question of the construction of the Great Siberian Railway which had occupied the attention of the Government and nation for over a third of a century; and this fact is one of the most important events of the present reign.

His Imperial Highness, the Tsarevich, in his voyage through the whole of Siberia from Vladivostok to the Urals, became personally acquainted with many of the immediate needs of this distant portion of the Empire and from that time the problem of the realization of this colossal work took a practical form. The construction was started simultaneously from the two opposite extremities of Siberia and as its completion necessitated numerous other subsidiary works having both the object of facilitating the actual construction and the peopling and industrial development of the districts adjoining the line, it was therefore decided at the end of 1892 to institute a special committee at St.-Petersburg under the title of the «Committee of the Siberian Railway» and to concentrate the entire direction of the matter in this Committee. His Imperial Highness the Tsarevich named by Imperial decree the President of this Committee, has already instituted a series of practical measures for the most rapid realization of this line connecting the Russian railway system with the Pacific coasts of Siberia.



## CHAPTER II.

**Geographical Review of Siberia.**

It has already been shown that Siberia may be divided into five component parts each of which, in virtue not only of the vastness of its area, but also from the difference of its natural conditions, of the composition of its population and of its historical development, should be considered separately. The present review commences with those two portions which are known separately as Western and Eastern Siberia, and together as Siberia proper, in the limited sense of the word.

**Western Siberia.**

Its component parts: the Altai slopes and the western Siberian lowlands; geographical and orographical review of the Altai slopes; the western Siberian lowlands, their hydrography and division into three zones or bands; the cultivated agricultural, the forest and the polar-tundrys (frozen marshes); climatic conditions of those zones; the flora of the western Siberian valley and of the Altai slopes; the character of the fauna of Western Siberia; its population and its ethnographical composition and emigration; the distribution of domestic animals.

**W**ESTERN Siberia, in the above sense of the term, is in its administrative aspect composed of the two governments, Tobolsk and Tomsk, and from a geographical point of view it occupies the greater portion, that is, 68 per cent, of the basin of the river Obi, or an area of 41,500 square geographical miles, that is, more than two-fifths of the area of the whole of European Russia and four times that of Germany.

With the exception of its north-western limits, where the low mountain chain of the Urals, from the sources of the river Kara to the northern extremity of the governments of Perm, form a boundary between Western Siberia on the one hand and the government of Vologda and Archangel on the other, and its entire south-eastern corner composed of the vast highlands of the Altai, the whole of Western Siberia presents a vast plain, very slightly elevated above the level of the Northern Ocean and plentifully watered by the numerous tributaries of the two immense branches of the vast system of the Obi, the rivers Irtysh and Obi.

The entire south-eastern corner of Western Siberia is occupied by the Altai highlands and lowlands forming the Altai Mining Region, the whole of which, to the extent of over

380,000 square versts, or 7,800 square geographical miles, forms a mountainous country eight times as large as Switzerland, and belonging not to the State but to His Imperial Majesty's Cabinet, that is, forming the private property of the Emperor. These lands passed into the hands of the Cabinet at the middle of the eighteenth century, from those of the Demidovs, the first occupiers and settlers, and the first to start a true mining industry in the country. One-third of the area of the Altai mining region is covered by the high mountain masses of the Altai. This is not a mountain chain but an immense highland, situated at the western extremity of the long chain of the Saian mountains which form the northern boundary of the internal highland of Asia and descends to the lowlands of Siberia. The Altai highlands are almost as broad as they are long and consist of a number of mountain ridges separated from each other by longitudinal and, in places, transversal valleys. The ridges extend in a not entirely parallel east to west direction, but slightly diverge towards the west after the fashion of a half-opened fan. Thus the Narimsk ridge which limits the longest of the Altai valleys, the Bukhtarminsk on the south, extends almost along the parallel, while the corresponding Kusnetsk Alatau, on the eastern extremity of the Altai highlands, has an almost meridional direction, while the rich in ores, but low Salairsk ridge extends to the north-east in a diagonal direction between the two above named ridges.

The high ranges of the Altai known under the name of «belki», which exactly corresponds to the word «Alps», rise far beyond the snow line; they extend for a certain distance almost parallel, being divided from one another by the deep ravines of the mountain streams. The highest of all the ridges is that known under the name of the Katunsk Stolby, or Pillars of Katoun, which includes the picturesque Siberian Mont Blanc, the Beloukha, 11,500 feet high. Many other of the mountain ridges of the Altai rise beyond the line of eternal snow, such as the Sailughemsk, Chuisk, Aigulaksk, Kholsunsk and Turgussun belki. The height of these mountains in many cases exceeds nine thousand feet, while the snow line on the northern side of the Altai is not more than 7,000 feet, while on the southern aspect it is not under eight thousand feet. In its south-eastern portion the Altai evince an inclination to form tablelands, that is, more or less wide highland plains extending into the Alpine zone of the steppes, like the Chuisk and Kuraisk. The Altai belki chiefly consist of crystalline rocks, such as granites, cianites, diorites and porphyries and of metamorphic rocks, such as crystalline schists and also of grauvacke. The strata of the sedimentary rocks have been lifted by the crystalline and belong to the ancient paleozoic formations, such as the upper, silurian, devonian and carboniferous systems. Secondary formations like the jurassic are only met with in the most northern branches of the Altai. All the formerly rich deposits of argentiferous lead and copper ores, occur at the junction of the crystalline and sedimentary rocks. Considerable glaciers descend from the Beloukha and feed the sources of the Katoun, one of the two component branches of the river Obi. The other of these branches, the Bea forms the outlet of the wonderful and vast Alpine lake Telets which in its beauty recalls the lake of the Four Cantons in Switzerland. Immediately over the lake rise the Telets belki, the highest of which, the Altyn-Tag, rises over 8,000 feet. At this point the steep declivities of the belki descend straight into the lake, which is fed by the mountain streams falling from the Sailughemsk ridge.

The Beia and the Katoun already unite at the foot of the Altai and form the majestic Obi. All the upper tributaries on the left of the Obi have their origin in the Altai highlands, for instance, the Anoui, Charysh and Alei, while those on the right hand proceed from the Kusnetsk Altai, for example, the Chumysh, Tom and Chulim. But the upper streams of the Irtysh, the other immense branch of the Obi, originate on the southern declivity of the Altai highlands within the frontier of the Chinese Empire. The reservoir collecting these upper streams is lake Zaissan which lies outside the limits of Western Siberia in the province of Semipalatinsk, while the right branch and large upper streams of the Irtysh below Zaissan, such as the Bukhtarma, Uba and Ulba, originate in the Siberian Altai belki and flow through their finest valleys. It is in these valleys, as well as over the whole of the north-western side of the Altai and of tablelands extending far into the Siberian valley, mainly the Salairsk and Kusnetsk Altai, that the mineral wealth of the country occurs. These minerals consist of argentiferous lead and copper ores, coloured stone from the so-called Korgonsk quarries, in the Korgonsk valley, and alluvial gold, while vast deposits of coal and iron ore occur in the so-called Kusnetsk coal basin between the Kusnetsk Alataou and Salairsk mountain ridges. Although the larger half of the Altai mining region, owing to its height above the level of the sea and the character of its soil, consisting as it does of rocks and rocky avalanches, is not habitable, still the remaining area which comprises not less than three thousand geographical square miles of the Altai lowlands is composed of fertile plains, hilly uplands and spacious valleys, and is extremely suitable for cultivation and colonization.

The remaining vast plain of Western Siberia which presents one of the most extensive lowlands in the world is covered with alluvial soil and in no portion of it do any denuded rock formations occur.

Only fresh water shells of the upper tertiary formation have been found in the friable strata which forms the under-soil. These strata consist of sand and clay and are chiefly exposed along the declivities of the right and always slightly elevated banks of the rivers. No point of these lowlands apparently rises over 400 feet above the sea level. Nevertheless the western Siberian lowland is plentifully watered by the two high rivers Obi and Irtysh and their numerous tributaries which flow together to the far north. The Obi-Irtysh river system comprises one of the most colossal basins of the earth and can compete with the river regions of the Yellow and Blue rivers and the Nile of the Old world, or the Amazon and the Mississippi of the New, besides the neighbouring river systems of Siberia. The area of the river basin of the Obi within Western Siberia and the Chinese Empire is over 60,000 geographical square miles and the length of the river course, counting its source as either the Obi and Katoun or the Irtysh, Zaissan and Kara Irtysh, gives almost one and the same figure of 4,900 versts. Moreover the navigable network of the river includes the whole of the Obi from its mouth to the junction of the Beia with the Katoun and the Irtysh from its mouth to its rapids through the mountain gorge, above Ust-Kamenogorsk and the tributaries of the two chief branches of the system, the Tura, Tavda, Chulym and Tom to their lower courses. Unfortunately the colossal water way of Western Siberia has the great disadvantage, that it is locked by the ice of the gulf of Obi for the greater part of the year and is almost inaccessible to the sea



for this reason and also that the two chief rivers intersect the main line of the Siberian trade traffic at right angles. Although fortunately the junction of the two branches of the Obi forms an uninterrupted and excellent navigable route between the most important and almost extreme points of this line of traffic in Western Siberia, the cities of Tiumen and Tomsk, this route is too circuitous and for the greater part lies outside the cultivated and agricultural regions of Siberia.

Western Siberia abounds in lakes. Besides the picturesque mountain lakes in the narrow valleys and circular basins of the Altai, a very large quantity are situated in the Western Siberian lowlands, and especially in its southern limits, in the Ishimsk, Barabinsk and Kouloudinsk steppes. Among the lakes there are some of vast dimensions, such as lake Chan which covers over 60 geographical square miles. There are also numberless small lakes which have no outlets, although some are fresh water, as well as salt lakes.

In order to explain better the character of the vast Western Siberian lowlands and their capacity for settlements and cultivation, it is necessary to subdivide it into three zones presenting quite different types. The first of these types is the cultivated agricultural zone of Western Siberia. It is composed of all the districts of the government of Tobolsk, except the two northern, that is, the Berezovsk and Sourgoutsk districts, and also of the lesser northern portions of the Tarsk district and the greater northern portions of the Tourinsk and Tobolsk districts, of the government of Tobolsk and of all the lowland portions of the government of Tomsk which do not enter into the composition of the Altai mining district, with the exception, however, of the so-called Narymsk region which occupies four-fifths of the area of the Tomsk district. Under these conditions the cultivated agricultural zone of the Western Siberian plain occupies an area of 8,500 geographical square miles, and is characterized by the fact that it is capable of an agricultural and settled colonization, and at the same time is throughout plentiful in forest. Naturally in this zone there are also large areas which are unfitted for cultivation and a settled population. The most important example of such a locality are the so-called Barabinsk steppes, where the stagnant water of the fresh water lakes alternates with salt lakes and marshes, and the vast Vasugansk bog which occurs on the boundary of the cultivated agricultural zone. But it may be estimated that six thousand geographical square miles of this zone are suitable for colonization and agriculture. The second type is represented by the Western Siberian zone of high-stemmed forests, which comprise the great northern portions of the Tourinsk and Tobolsk districts, the northern portions of the Tarsk and the southern portions of the Sourgoutsk and Berezovsk districts of the government of Tobolsk, and the whole of the vast regions of Narym in the government of Tomsk. This zone occupies an area greater than that of the Altai mining region and the cultivated agricultural zone taken together, namely, eighteen thousand geographical square miles, and it is characterized by the fact that it consists, like the greater part of the government of Archangel and the north-eastern portions of the government of Vologda in European Russia, of a continuous mass of forests and bogs, in which there are only isles or oases in any way suitable for settlement, scattered chiefly on the firm banks of the rivers. And lastly the third type comprises the portions of the Beresovsk and Sourgoutsk districts lying beyond the parallel of Beresov, that is, 64° north latitude, and forming the polar marsh land zone which extends over seven thousand geographical square miles of Western

Siberia. In this portion the forests become thinner and smaller and change into low bushes. The boggy marsh land covered with mosses and lichens is frozen for the greater part of the year and is totally unfitted for an agricultural settled habitation. The under-soil of the marshes never thaws below a depth of one and a half arshines and consists of intermittent strata of frozen earth and clay and of pure ice, which thus forms, as it were, the rock formation of the district.

The climatic conditions of each of these three zones are naturally very different, and in them is also found the explanation of the difference in the comparative fitness of each for cultivation and colonization. In general, compared with the climate of the corresponding latitudes of European Russia, the climate of Western Siberia is distinguished by its great continentality, which is seen in the lower average yearly temperature compared with the localities lying under one and the same degree of latitude in European Russia, in the greater severity of the winters and consequently in the greater difference between the average temperature of summer and winter, and between the coldest and warmest months, and lastly in the somewhat smaller rainfall and snowfall.

Thus in the cultivated agricultural zone of Western Siberia, the average yearly temperature is nearly zero, or for the average, taken at eight points of observation  $+0.33^{\circ}$ , while that of the same latitudes in European Russia does not exceed  $3^{\circ}$  Celsius. The average winter temperature of the cultivated agricultural zone of Western Siberia is  $-17^{\circ}$ , and during the coldest months  $-18^{\circ}$ , while in the corresponding parts of European Russia it is  $-11.5^{\circ}$  and during the coldest month  $-12.5^{\circ}$  Celsius. On the other hand the average summer temperature of  $+17.5^{\circ}$  and that of the warmest month  $+19.5^{\circ}$  even exceed, although not more than half a degree, the similar temperatures in the corresponding latitudes of European Russia. Thus the difference of the average summer and winter temperatures in the agricultural zone of Western Siberia is  $35^{\circ}$ , while in the corresponding parts of European Russia it is  $28^{\circ}$ . The difference of the average temperatures of the coldest and warmest months in Western Siberia is  $39^{\circ}$ , and in the corresponding parts of European Russia  $32^{\circ}$ ; but there is an entire similarity between the average temperatures of the cultivated agricultural zone of Western Siberia and the corresponding parts of European Russia during the five months of vegetation, that is, from the first of May to the first of October, new style, when the average temperature of one and the other is  $+15^{\circ}$ . Hence this region of Western Siberia is not less suitable for a settled agricultural life than European Russia between  $55^{\circ}$  and  $58^{\circ}$  of the northern latitude, and indeed it is better fitted, because the soil of Western Siberia is fresher than that of European Russia, the pasturage richer and vaster, the rivers more abundant in water and there is no want of forests.

The climatic conditions of the more southern lowland and of the excellently sheltered from the north, although more elevated, valleys of the Altai are still better. But naturally these conditions in the Altai mining region become less favourable as the elevation increases. Thus at Barnaoul at an absolute elevation of 460 feet the average temperature during the five months of vegetation is  $+15^{\circ}$ , which is most favourable for the development of agriculture, while at Salair at an absolute height of 1,180 feet this temperature scarcely exceeds  $+13^{\circ}$  Celsius, which is not suitable for the ripening of the more tender kinds of grain.

The more continental character of the cultivated agricultural zone of Western Siberia, as compared with the corresponding latitudes of European Russia, is also observable in the amount of rain and snow. In the region under consideration the annual rain and snowfall is 380 millimetres, while in the corresponding parts of European Russia it is as much as 500. A still greater difference is seen in the winter fall, which in the Siberian zone is only 50 millimetres while in the corresponding portions of European Russia it is over 80. In summer the difference is not so great, namely, the fall in the Western Siberian zone is 175 millimetres and in the corresponding parts of European Russia, 185. Hence in the agricultural zone of Siberia the winters are in general far poorer in snow than in European Russia, so that in the southern limits of the agricultural zone the cattle scratch away the snow with their hoofs and find fodder under their feet in winter, only the winds (*bouran*) which rise at a temperature of not under  $-10^{\circ}$  Celsius, and meeting with no impediment in the vast plain, sweep away the snow into huge drifts and snow ridges.

The Altai lowlands differ but little from the cultivated agricultural zone in respect to the rain and snow fall, only the quantity is far greater on the very slopes of the north and north-west Altai, and especially in the valleys. Thus at the station of the Altai clergy Uial, the yearly fall is 600 millimetres, half of which fall is during the three summer months. This explains the luxurious vegetation of the Altai. The dews, for instance, in the Uihinsk and Ouhinsk valley are so powerful that when riding in clear sunny weather along the narrow pathway the rider becomes quite wet, as his horse breaks through the tall grass. But on the other hand, on the southern Altai, the slopes of the wide valleys facing the south are so dry that they are quite void of forest vegetation and only exhibit the high steppe plants of Central Asia. The so-called forest and forestry zone of Western Siberia presents quite other climatic conditions, industries and sporadic agriculture. Here the average annual temperature is as low as  $-2^{\circ}$ , while in the corresponding zone of European Russia it exceeds  $+1^{\circ}$ ; the winter temperature is  $-20^{\circ}$ , and that of the coldest month,  $-22^{\circ}$ , while in the corresponding parts of European Russia, the mean winter temperature is  $-14^{\circ}$ , and that of the coldest month  $-16^{\circ}$ . Even the average summer temperature,  $+14^{\circ}$ , is lower than that of the corresponding localities of European Russia,  $+16^{\circ}$ ; and only the temperature of the hottest month ( $18^{\circ}$ ), surpasses that in European Russia ( $17^{\circ}$ ). Thus, the difference, too, between the mean temperatures of winter and summer, ( $34^{\circ}$ ), and in particular, between the coldest and hottest months, ( $40^{\circ}$ ), is more considerable than the difference for the corresponding parts of European Russia, the first being there  $30^{\circ}$  and the second  $33^{\circ}$  Celsius. As far, however, as concerns the temperature of the vegetative period, especially important for agriculture, it falls in the zone under consideration to  $12^{\circ}$  and lower, and is even more unfavourable than in the corresponding parts of European Russia, where it for the most part certainly, stands higher than  $12^{\circ}$ , and here and there even, than  $13^{\circ}$ , as in St. Petersburg, Bielozersk, Vologda, Ustiug, Slohodskaia and Cherdyn. Everywhere where the temperature of the vegetative period does not exceed on an average  $12^{\circ}$  Celsius, agriculture reaches, so to say, its limit, and shows itself only in a sporadic form, scanty cultivated oases being lost in vast areas, covered with forest and morass and unsuited to tillage. As far, however, as concerns rainfall, its amount is very much more considerable in the forest zone of Western Siberia than in the agricultural zone, forming 470 millimetres a year, which differs

very little from the rainfall occurring in the course of the year in the corresponding parts of European Russia, 480 millimetres. Only a larger proportion than in European Russia falls in the summer months, namely 220 millimetres, the average for European Russia being 190.

Finally, very various are the climatic conditions presented by the polar tundra zone, of which unfortunately we are in a position to judge almost exclusively from the observations taken on the southern border of the zone at Beriozov. Judging from these observations the mean annual temperature falls here as low as  $-5^{\circ}$ , and even lower, the soil at a depth of three-quarters to one arshine being perpetually frozen. The winter temperature is lower than  $-21^{\circ}$ , that of the coldest month, below  $-23^{\circ}$ , while the summer temperature does not exceed  $+13^{\circ}$ . 5, and that of the hottest month,  $+18^{\circ}$ , forming a difference between summer and winter of  $34^{\circ}$ , and between the hottest and coldest months, of  $49^{\circ}$  Celsius. In Beriozov the mean temperature of the five-month vegetative period scarcely exceeds  $9^{\circ}$ , and it is therefore intelligible that the rivers are here ice bound forty days longer than on the frontier of the forest and agricultural zones, that the cereals are quite incapable of growing and that the forests attain the extreme range of their existence. Domestic animals also reach their limit in the polar tundra zone, with the exception of the reindeer, which is peculiar to the tundras of this zone. To the north of Beriozov, beyond the arctic circle, the rainfall also decreases; in Ohdorsk the annual amount is only 218 millimetres, while in Beriozov it is as much as 467 millimetres.

The climatic conditions of a country appear most clearly and directly expressed in its vegetable covering. It follows from the above explained climatic conditions that the herbaceous vegetation of the Western Siberia lowland differs very little from the flora of the corresponding zones of European Russia, the more so that the comparatively low range of the Ural is no barrier to the dissemination of plants whose seeds are freely borne hither and thither by the wind over the vast plains adjacent to either side of the mountain range and lighting upon analogous conditions are sown and reproduce their kind without let or hindrance. The traveller entering Siberia through Ekaterinburg or Zlatoust, crossing the whole Siberian plain as far as Tomsk and further to the Yenissei, is not struck with any difference in the herbaceous vegetation, but very few western species disappear, at times changing to eastern varieties, as for example, the pale yellow heads of the European crow's-foot (*trollius europæus* L.) are replaced by the fiery orange of its Asiatic variety (*trollius asiaticus* L.). Only very few oriental forms appear not occurring in European Russia, or only here and there crossing its frontier, as for example, some anemones (*anemone reflexa* Steph., *altaica* Fisch. and *pennsylvanica* L.), one beautiful species of paeony (*paeonia anomala* L.), a few cruciferae (*dentaria tenuifolia* Led, *chorispora sibirica*, D.C., *hesperis aprica* Poir), one species of violet (*viola uniflora*), among the caryophyllaceae, *lychnis sibirica* L., among the compositae, a few species of wormwood (*artemisia desertorum* Spr., *turczanoviana* Bess; *macrantha* Led *latifolia* Led), the eastern forms of gentians (*gentiana auriculata*, Pall., *aquatica* L., *halenia sibirica* Borkh), et. cetera. But the general character of the herbaceous flora remains, the same, the plants merely becoming somewhat more sappy and fresh, and the flowers brighter coloured than in European Russia. It is different with the trees upon which not the mean temperature of the vegetative period alone, almost constant on that side of the Ural, exerts

an influence, but the comparative severity of the winters and their relative dryness. Of the trees spread over all European Russia, there disappear, immediately on crossing the Ural: the oak, two species, (*quercus sessiliflora*, Im. and *quercus pedunculata* Ehr.), the hazel (*corylus avellana* L.), the two elms (*ulmus campestris* L. and *ulmus pedunculata* Fouq.), all species of maple (*acer*), the ash (*fraxinus excelsior* L.), and finally, the apple tree (*pyrus malus* L.). The woods of the agricultural and forest regions of Siberia are composed of the conifers: the Siberian fir (*abies sibirica* Led.), passing from Siberia into north-eastern Russia, and in Siberia itself reaching to Kamchatka, the oriental or Siberian pitch-pine (*pinus orientalis* L.), also passing into the northern and north-eastern part of European Russia, and through Siberia reaching the Kuril islands; two species of larch, the Siberian (*larix sibirica* Led.), also passing into the north-eastern part of European Russia and in Siberia spread as far as Baikal, and the dahur larch (*larix dahurica* Trautv.) a purely Siberian form, occurring in Western Siberia between Beriozov and Obdorsk; the Siberian cedar (*pinus cembra* L.), scarcely crossing the Ural on the European side, but in Siberia spread as far as Behring Sea and crossing into the northern part of America; finally, the common pine (*pinus communis* L.). The Siberian taigas and urmans are formed of these species. With the conifers in these taigas are associated certain foliage trees, in particular the aspen, and to some extent, the hirsch on the skirts of the taiga. In the cultivated or agricultural zone, with soils similar to Chernoziom of European Russia, foliage trees prevail, and even over such areas as are called steppes by the Siberians; for example, on the Baraba steppe, groves of trees alternate pleasantly with prairie, and in localities occupied by a permanent colonization with field and fallow. The foliage forests of the Western Siberian plain consist of the following species: the common hirsch (*betula alba* L.), aspen (*populus tremula* L.), the abele (*populus alba* L.) occurring only in the southern part of the plain; both species of alder (*almus glutinosa* W. and *almus incana* W.), linden (*tilia parvifolia* Ehrh), the last also confined to the southern part of the cultivated zone. To these lofty kinds must be added two kinds of rowan, the ordinary mountain ash (*sorbus aucuparia* L.) and the Siberian species (*sorbus tomentosa* L.); the common bird cherry (*prunus padus* L.) and also many sorts of willow (*salix*) of which more than fifteen European Russian species occur in the forest and agricultural zones of Siberia.

There are very few shrubs thriving in the Western Siberian plain which are not found in the wild state in European Russia. Among such must however be reckoned the common garden acacia (*caragana arborescens* Lam.), the red hawthorn (*crataegus sanguinea* Pall) the cornel (*cornus alba* L.), so well acclimatized in the gardens of European Russia, and one kind of meadow sweet (*spiraea fruticosa* L.).

The flora of the polar tundra zone presents very little difference from that of the European Russia tundras of Lapland and Samoyed. Nearly all this zone's characteristic low-growing, stunted shrubs, for example one species of arbutus, (*arctostaphilus alpina* Ad.) the heathers or andromedas (*cassiope tetragona* Don., *C. hypnoides* Don.), *phylodoce saxifolia* Salish., *loiseleuria procumbens* Don., a species of *ledum*—*latifolium* Ait., also belonging to the European flora, and only one species of the polar azalea (*osmothamauus fragrans* D. C.) and one polar willow (*salix arctica* L.) are not met within European Russia.

The mountain flora of the Altai uplands on the other hand is in quite a different condition. Here, beginning already at a height of three thousand feet, the vegetation is extremely peculiar and gradually passes into the alpine flora, proper to the Asiatic Alps. Of course this flora contains not a few plants which belong to the arctic zone of the Old World, which also climb the European Alps, but an enormous proportion of the plants are the typical and peculiar property of the alpine and subalpine zones of the Altai Saian mountainous region, when only a few species cross the ranges of Central Asia, such as the Tian-Shan and the connected Sc mirechinsk and Zailisk Altai. Among the shrubs characteristic of the subalpine zone of the Altai may be noticed: a few species of acacia (*caragano microphylla* Zam., *bungei* Led., *pygmaea* D. C., *spinosa* D. C., *tragacanthoides* Poir), two dog roses (*rosa platycantha* Schr. and *Geblariana* Schr.), the galten tree (*cotoneaster uniflora* Bge), some species of currant (*ribes aciculare* Sm., *saxatile* Pall, *cuneatum* Kar., *heterotrichum* Moq., *procumbens* Pall), two species of tamarisk (*tamariscenae*), *myricaria alopecuroides* Sch. and *daurica* Ehr.), three honeysuckles (*lonicera humilis* Kar., *hispida* L. and *bungeana* Led.), one species of azalea (*osmothamnus pallidus* D.C.) and two rhododendra (*rhododendron chrysanthum* Pall. and *davuricum* L.); among acicular leaved shrubs, *ephedra stenosperma* Schr., and *intermedia* Schr., *juniperus pseudosabina* Fisch. and *davurica* Pall., and two kinds of birch, *betula microphylla* Bge, and *betula tortuosa* Led.

Much more characteristic is the herbaceous vegetation of the alpine and subalpine meadows and slopes, which enchant the eye with the richness and brilliancy of their flowers. The following may be indicated as among the species most characteristic for the Altai Sayan mountainous system, a few beautiful anemones (*anemone umbrosa* Mey., *Fischeriana* D. C. and *pulsatilla bungeana* Mey.), peculiar kinds of crow's-foot (*ranunculus altaicus* Laxm., *longicaulis*, *pulchellus*, *natans*, *lasiocarpus*, *propinquus*, *grandifolius* Mey., and the exceptionally interesting *oxygraphis glacialis* Bge. and *callianthemum rutaefolium* Mey), a *ranunculus* with pale lilac flowers (*hegemone lilacina* Bge.) larkspurs (*delphinium laxiflorum* and *dictyocarpum* D. C.), three fumitories (*corydalis nobilis* Pers., *stricta* Pers. and *inconspicua* Bge.), as many as thirty altaic species of crucifers, belonging to the high alpine zone (of the genera *mathiola*, *arabis*, *parrya*, *macropodium*, *psilotrichum*, *draba*, *holargidium*, *chorispora*, *dontostemon*, *braya*, *eutrema*, *Hutchinsia*) charming species of violets (*viola altaica* Pall., *macrocarpa* Bge., *imberbis* Led. and *acuminata* Led.), fifteen or so peculiar species of caryophylleae and stellariae, altaic varieties of flata (*linum violaceum* Bge), St. John's worts (*hypericum gebleri* Bge), some forty beautiful variegated sort of leguminosae, among which especially prominent are numerous species of *astragalus* (*astragalus* and *oxytropis*), whose extensive family climbs from the Central Asiatic steppes to the eternal snows of the Asiatic mountain ranges. Next follow the quaint, high alpine forms of rosaceae (*sibbaldia adpressa* Bge., *dryadanthé bungeana* Led., *chamaerodon altaica* Bge., *potentilla altaica* Bge., *comarum salessowi* Bge.). Further there are a few characteristic saxifrages, among which in particular the so-called Chagyr tea (*saxifraga crassifolia* L.), the large leaves of which serve as a surrogate to tea. There are some twenty species of Altai compositae, among them several species of *saussure* (*pygmaea* Spr., *pycnocephala* Led., *latifolia* Led., *acuminata* Turcz., *foliosa* Led.) Finally the primalaceae largely contribute to the adorn-

ment of the alpine meadows of the Altai (*primula longiscapa* Led.), charming blue and yellow gentians (*gentiana atrata* Bge., *azurea* Bge., *tenuis* Bge., *altaica* Pall, *karelini* Fries., *frigida* Haenk., *macrophylla* Pall.), irises, (*iris glaucescens* Bge., *bloudowi* Led. and *tigridia* Bge.) and some bulbous plants: *tulipa altaica* Pali., *lilium tennifolium* Fisch. and *L. spectabile* Link, *fritillaria verticillata* W. et cetera.

The extraordinary wealth and variety of the Altai flora finds its explanation not only in the circumstance that in the Altai, as in every mountainous country, within a comparatively narrow compass, various climates are superimposed one upon another, but also in this that the extremely varied contour of the Altai mountain region presents very distinct ridges, cut off by deep longitudinal valleys and intersected by short transverse valleys, and at the same time extensive elevated plateaux and low hummocky foot hills. Over the whole of this vast mountainous area situated between the limitless and relatively moist plain of Western Siberia sloping to the Arctic Ocean, and the almost equally unlimited parched steppes of Central Asia, a struggle is constantly going on between the north and north-west damp aerial currents and the southern and perfectly dry winds in the lower layers of the atmosphere. In consequence of this, polar forms, or an isolated high alpine vegetation, prevail upon the northern slopes of the Altai, while its southern slopes are climbed by the flora of the Central Asian steppes, which chancing as it rises upon more favourable climatic conditions, becomes differentiated into a whole series of original high steppe varieties. To such forms belong, for example, the peculiar species of *astragalus* and *oxytropis* of the Altaic meadows of the alpine zone.

A like dependence upon climatic conditions is also shown by the higher invertebrates, namely, the insects, and especially such of them as for example, the majority of the coleoptera, not possessing any considerable capacity for flight, have not any extended regions of distribution and are accordingly dependent to a greater extent upon local conditions of climate, soil and vegetation. But here, as in the case of the flora, the insect fauna of the Western Siberian plain differs little from that of European Russia and only the fauna of the Altai mountain region is as richly varied and original as the flora. The local forms of coleoptera incapable of flight, are peculiarly eccentric; for example, species of *carabus*, some of which are exceedingly rare: *car. imperialis* Fisch., *car. regalis* Boeb., *car. Gebleri* Fisch., *car. Leachi* Fisch; *car. Loschnikowii* Fisch, et cetera, and wingless wood cutters (for example, *dorcadion politum* Dalm.) et cetera. The vertebrates have a wider area of distribution. Those which are hunted maintain themselves best in the vast uninhabited regions of Eastern Siberia, and will accordingly be dealt with when that country comes to be described.

The question of the distribution and classification of the native and Russian population of Western Siberia will now be considered.

The total population of Western Siberia amounts to 2,700,000 of both sexes, of whom only eight per cent are natives, the immigrant Russian element forming ninety-two per cent. Among the native population the first place in point of numbers is occupied by Finno-turkish tribes, known under the collective name of Tartars. They are a remnant of the tribes which composed the ancient Kuchum Siberian Kingdom. There are now calculated to be ninety thousand of these Tartars in Western Siberia. They are distributed in such a way that as

many as 20 thousand dwell in the Altai mining district. Half are settled, accepted long ago the orthodox faith and are strongly russified; the other half nomadizes, or more accurately, leads a vagabond life and holds to shamanism. In the cultivated or agricultural zone are 50,000 Tartars; part of them have become russified, but the majority profess mohammedanism, and to a certain extent, as for example, in the Baraba steppe, lead a nomad life. Finally, in the zone of forest industries and sporadic agriculture there are yet another 20,000 Tartars, partly with fixed habitations, partly wandering, and mainly professing the mohammedan religion. The Tartars speak for the most part a Tiurksk dialect, resembling that of the Kazan Tartars in European Russia, but among some of the Tartar tribes of the Altai mining district Finnish dialects are still preserved.

Another native element consists of the purely Finnish tribes of the Voguls and Ostiaks. The number of both together amounts to 40,000 souls. The majority of these tribes, namely 30,000, inhabit the forest zone of Western Siberia and belong to the hunting peoples. Only the southern members have accepted orthodoxy and become russianized; the majority adheres to shamanism. As many as 10,000 Ostiaks dwell in the polar tundra zone, where they occupy themselves with reindeer breeding and fishing, and have become largely assimilated with the Samoyeds.

The third native element is the polar tribe of the Samoyeds. They are reckoned to number 20,000 souls, of whom the majority still inhabit the forest zone; the minority, the polar tundra zone, where they are engaged in rearing reindeer and in fishing.

Finally the fourth native element is formed by the Mongol tribe of Kalmycks, inhabiting the Altai mining region to the number of 20,000. The russification of the natives only proceeds in the cultivated zone and in the Altai foot hills. In the forest region, and still more in the polar tundra region and in the internal valleys of the Altai, the natives preserve their national traits. On the whole there is no evidence of the extinction of the natives in Western Siberia.

The most considerable part of the population of Western Siberia is composed of Russian emigrants, who are very unevenly distributed over the different zones or regions of Western Siberia. In the cultivated zone of Western Siberia dwell 1,800,000 persons of both sexes, that is, 212 inhabitants to the square geographical mile, out of whom less than three per cent belong to the native non-Russian population. Considerable also is the population of the Altai mining district, amounting to 600,000 souls of both sexes, or 78 per square geographical mile, of whom the native tribes form not more than seven per cent. The population scattered in small oases among an unbroken stretch of forests and swamps, namely that of the zone of high growing trees, forest industries and sporadic agriculture, is much thinner. Its extent does not exceed 270,000, or 15 inhabitants to the square geographical mile, among whom the native tribes form 15 per cent. Finally in the polar tundra zone the population does not exceed 30,000 of both sexes, the natives here, however, constituting more than 95 per cent, which clearly demonstrates that the Russian settled population cannot live in this zone, the Russians here appearing not as settlers but only as proprietors and exploiters of the country.

It is evident that in Western Siberia the relation borne by the town inhabitants to the total population is even lower than in European Russia, where in its turn, the proportion of



the town population is low enough compared with the same proportion in Western Europe and America. In European Russia the proportion of the inhabitants of the towns to the total population is 13 per cent, in Western Siberia, less than eight per cent.

Of the towns of any importance in Western Siberia possessing at the same time a really urban character, there are only seven: Tomsk, with a population of about 40,000; Tobolsk, with 20,000 inhabitants; Barnaoul and Biisk each with 17,000; Tiumen, with 14,000; Mariinsk and Kolyvan, each with 13,000 inhabitants.

In immediate connection with the density, distribution and manner of life of the population is the distribution and apportionment of the domestic animals, of which the nearest to man, at any rate in country life, is the horse, serving as it does not only for field work but for travelling from place to place and for the conveyance of goods. The population of Western Siberia, occupying as it does a vast and thinly inhabited territory, upon which agriculture, working a virgin soil without steam motors, leaving extensive wastes covered with a luxuriant herbaceous vegetation, has a particular need for the horse and is in a position to feed it from the abundance of fodder. Therefore, while in the thickly populated and most highly industrial countries of Europe like, for example, Belgium and Great Britain, the proportion of horses per 100 inhabitants hardly exceeds the figure five; in the more agricultural countries of France and Germany, does not surpass eight; in those still very rich in natural meadows and pastures, such as Hungary and Denmark, it reaches twelve and seventeen, and in European Russia and the United States of America, twenty-two; in Western Siberia the number of horses per 100 inhabitants reaches sixty-three, the absolute number being 1,700,000, in other words, to each man of working age there are two to three horses.

Under such circumstances, as might be inferred, the number of the other domestic animals is also proportionately very high. To every 100 inhabitants in Western Siberia there are fifty-two head of horned cattle, the absolute number being 1,400,000, that is, from two to three head per married couple. Finally there are eighty-five sheep and goats per 100 inhabitants, the absolute number being 2,300,000. The northern reindeer is the domestic animal of the polar tribes, inhabiting the polar tundra zone which might in Western Siberia be called the region of reindeer breeding. The absolute number of these animals in Western Siberia extends to 240,000 head. As the population employed in rearing reindeer in the polar tundra zone and in the northern part of the forest zone, Samoyeds and a portion of the Ostiaks, does not exceed 40,000, it follows that there are 600 reindeer to every 100 inhabitants; and as long as such a proportion per man of domestic animals in the far north can be maintained, so long the polar tribes of Western Siberia will not exhibit any tendency to become extinguished.



## CHAPTER III.

**Eastern Original Siberia.**

Its Sayan borderland; the hydrography of Eastern Siberia and its division into three zones or tracts, the cultivated or agricultural, mingling with the Sayan foothills; the zone of high stemmed trees and forest industries, and the polar tundra; the climatic conditions of each of these zones; the vegetative covering of Eastern Siberia and its fauna; mammalia of the polar and forest zones; the population of Eastern Siberia, its ethnographical composition and disposition; the distribution of the domestic animals.

**E**ASTERN Siberia in the narrow sense, that is, the eastern half of the original part of Siberia inhabited principally by a Russian population, in administrative relation is made up of two governments, those of Yenisseisk and Irkutsk, and in geographical respects occupies the greater part of the basin of the twin river Yenissei-Angara, and farther embraces the riverine regions of the polar streams, Piassina, Taimyr, and Khatanga, the small upper part of the basin of the river Lena and parts of the frontier basins of the rivers Taz on the north-west, and Anabera on the north-east. Even thus limited, Eastern Siberia covers an immense area of sixty-two thousand square geographical miles, exceeding twice the extent of Germany, Austria and France taken together.

The southern borderland of Eastern Siberia is formed by the northern chain of the long and lofty Sayan range, which for a considerable part of its extent bears the name of Erghik-Targak-Taiga and serves as the frontier between Russian territory and the Chinese possessions. This chain follows roughly a direction from west to east, but departs from the parallel by a wide bend to the north. South of this chain, between it and one further to the south bearing the name of Tannu-Ola and connected at both its extremities with the Sayan by mountain spurs, spreads a very wide valley shut in on all sides by mountains known in the most ancient times by the name of Erghené-Kon or Irgana-Kon, and celebrated in history for having according to tradition served as the cradle of the Tiurk tribe, which it is said expanded itself from this point over all Asia. In this valley mingle the two great constituent branches of the Yenissei, flowing from the southern slope of the Sayan, the rivers Ulukem and Beikem. After its confluence with three tributaries, the river Kem so reinforced receives the Kemchik on the left or western side of the valley, and taking the name of Yenissei, bursts through the narrow defile of the Sayan and comes out on the Sayan slope of Eastern Siberia. Within the limits of the Yenisseisk, and in the western part of the Irkutsk government the Sayan range proceeds without subdivision, merely sending off a few spurs penetrating deeply into the southern part of the Yenisseisk government on the north.

Somewhat more complex is the construction of the Sayan in the south-eastern portion of the Irkutsk government, beginning with its most elevated mass situated between the head waters of the Beikem and Ulukem, on the one hand, and those of the left tributaries of the Angara, Oka, Belaia and Irkut, on the other. Here this range shows a tendency to break up into chains, or ridges, parallel to each other and separated by longitudinal valleys, here united by projections of the main crest, there cut asunder by transverse dales through which the numerous rivers struggle out the slope of Eastern Siberia and form the left tributaries of the Angara.

In the midst of the main crest of the Sayan, at the south-eastern corner of the Irkutsk government, the highest mountain mass of the Sayan range lifts itself far above the limits of eternal snow in its highest point, the Munku-Sardyk peak, lying on the Chinese frontier, reaching an elevation of 11,430 feet above the sea level. This mountain, as also some other summits in its neighbourhood situated on the projections of the Sayan range crossing into Russian territory and called here not belki as in the Altai, but «golets», feeds more or less considerable glaciers and ice fields, occurring on a somewhat greater scale in this part of the Sayan than in the Katun Pillars of the Altai. A little lower than those golets rise, parallel to the main crest of the Sayan, the forward ridges, among which the most remarkable is the Tunka range lying close to Irkutsk. In another of these ridges, at a distance of 120 versts to the south-west of Irkutsk, is the mountain Khamar-Daban, reaching an elevation of 8,940 feet above the sea level. In connection with this Khamar-Daban are two ridges stretching almost parallel to each other in a north-easterly direction. In the wide and very long valley separating them, is situated one of the largest lakes on the world's surface, Baikal, whose area of 640 square geographical miles is equal to the extent of the Kingdom of Holland with the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg; its breadth exceeds the length of Lake Geneva, and its length is 670 versts. Lake Baikal is fed mainly by rivers flowing over the Transbaikal region, the Upper Angara, Barguzin and Selenga. Its outlet is the colossal right branch of the vast river system of Eastern Siberia, the Angara, bursting first through the defile of the Baikal range, confining the lake on the north-west, and afterwards intersecting the extremities of several of the spurs of the Sayan extending far over its slope. It is at these points of intersection that the Angara forms its celebrated rapids.

All the chief summits of the Sayan range, and even of its offspurs, consist of crystalline rocks, granites, sienites, more seldom diorites, porphyries and diabases, and also of gneiss and crystalline schists. In the eastern part of the Sayan range, and also in the low ridges intersecting the Eastern Siberian plain between the Angara and the Podkamennaia Tunguzka, real plutonic rocks are met with, such as bazalts, dolerites and even lavas, from the long since extinct volcanoes, with volcanic tufas, obsidian and pumice. The sedimentary rocks upon the slopes of the Sayan ridges consist of sandstones, schists and limestone belonging to the paleozoic formations, silurian, devonian and carboniferous, but further to the north in the denuded parts of the low ridges, intersecting the Eastern Siberia plain, secondary formations also are met with, such as triassic and jurassic.

The mineral resources of Eastern Siberia are considerable. Upon the northern acclivity of the Sayan in the Yenisseisk government, mines of argentiferous lead and copper are found, and

in the region of the foot hills are scattered here and there seams of coal and iron ores. Deposits of excellent graphite are found upon one of the offsets of the Sayan range, and lapis lazuli has been discovered along the river Sliudianka, also in that region. Eastern Siberia, however, is richest of all in gold bearing sands, situated not only on the slope of the Kuznetski Altai and upon the spurs of the Sayan range, but to a yet greater degree upon the extensive area between the Angara and the Podkamennaia Tunguzka.

Eastern Siberia is watered as abundantly as Western. The great river Yenissei, consisting like the Obi of two almost equal branches, the Yenissei proper and the Angara, has a length of 3,800 versts, if the Ulukem be reckoned as its beginning; and of 4,800 versts, if its head waters be taken as the Upper Angara or the Selenga. The vast watershed of this river covers an area of 54,000 square geographical miles.

As a water way, the Yenissei has the same inconveniences as the Obi; it intersects the great Siberian tract at right angles, flows northwards, almost without swerving, and falls into the inhospitable Kara Sea, ice-bound the greater part of the year. However, the experience of the last twenty years has shown that the mouth of the Yenissei is more accessible to communication by sea, than that of the Obi, and that for the most part ships penetrating in late autumn into the Kara Sea through the narrow straits dividing the two islands of Nova Zembla, the so-called Matochkin Shar, or through the Kara Gates, cannot only reach the Yenissei bay without encountering any obstacle, but having unloaded and reloaded at the wharf, constructed near the entrance to the frith previously to the closing of the navigation, may return to Europe.

The Angara and Yenissei mingle their waters precisely as do the Obi and Irtysh, but the curve formed by them is not thrust so far to the north, passes through localities less desert in their character, and with the existing hydrographic communication between the Obi and Yenissei by means of the Ket and Koss, the Angara might serve as an excellent water way to Baikal and Transbaikalia, were it not intersected by a whole series of cataracts and falls, which are however now being gradually cleared away. Besides the Angara both the tributaries of the Yenissei falling into that river below the Angara, the Podkamennaia and Lower Tunguzka, are navigable, flowing however through regions almost absolutely deserted.

The great expanse of Eastern Siberia may be subdivided into three tracts or zones differing very much from each other. The first and most southern of them is that which is called the cultivated or agricultural, but which properly corresponds to the two regions of Western Siberia characterized above, namely, the Altai mining and low-lying agricultural, as the foothills of the Sayan range and its offshoots occupy the whole cultivated zone of Eastern Siberia, and as it is impossible to draw a definite boundary between the agricultural and the mining zones of Sayan. The cultivated agricultural zone is composed accordingly of the four southern districts of the Yenissei government, namely, Minussinsk, Achinsk, Krasnoyarsk and Kansk, and all the districts of the government of Irkutsk, but Kerensk. This zone of Eastern Siberia so defined, includes an area of 10,500 square geographical miles, but as the greater half of this area, partly on account of its high absolute altitude, partly on account of its mountainous and rocky condition, stony or swampy soil, is entirely unsuited for agricultural purposes; the whole zone hardly counts above 5,000 square geographical miles for colonization.

The very climatic conditions of the cultivated or agricultural zone of Eastern Siberia are less advantageous than in the corresponding region of Western Siberia. The mean annual temperature here and there approaches zero, but in the eastern zone it is a negative quantity ( $-2.3$ ), and therefore  $0.5^{\circ}$  colder than in the western. The average winter temperatures are  $-18^{\circ}$  Celsius, and that of the coldest month  $-20^{\circ}$ , or  $1^{\circ}$  and  $2.5^{\circ}$  below the corresponding temperatures of Western Siberia. The average summer temperature is  $16.5^{\circ}$ , and that of the hottest month  $19^{\circ}$ , which also fall short of the corresponding temperatures of Western Siberia by  $1^{\circ}$  and  $0.5^{\circ}$ ; only the differences between the temperatures of summer and winter,  $35^{\circ}$ , and between those of the hottest and coldest months,  $39^{\circ}$ , remain approximately identical. But on the other hand, the most important factor in the capacity of the country for agriculture, the mean temperature of the five-month vegetative period, amounting in the zone under consideration to only  $14^{\circ}$ , is in this part of Eastern Siberia less advantageous than in the corresponding zone of Western Siberia.

And as regards the quantity of rain and snow falling during the whole year, the cultivated or agricultural zone of Eastern Siberia is placed in less advantageous circumstances than the same zone of Western Siberia, namely, the total precipitation is 360 millimetres instead of 380; the summer rainfall is 150 instead of 175, and only the winter shows a certain preponderancy, 56, or in other words is more snowy. The more elevated foothills of the cultivated or agricultural zone are placed in incomparably less advantageous climatic conditions, situated as, for example, Kultuk, at the southern extremity of Baikal at an absolute height of 1,600 feet, at the very foot of the Sayan, or as the mine of Preobrazhensk on the Biriussa at an elevation of 3,800 feet in a mountainous valley. Here the mean annual temperature is on an average less than  $-8^{\circ}$ , the winter almost the same, but the summer colder, the mean temperature being  $12.5^{\circ}$ , that of the hottest month  $14^{\circ}$ , in consequence of which the average temperature of the five-month vegetative period is so low,  $10.2^{\circ}$ , that it is an obstacle to agriculture.

The second zone, like the corresponding one in Western Siberia, may be called the zone of tall trees, forest industries and sporadic agriculture. It includes the Kerenk district of the government of Yenissei and part of the Yenissei district as far as  $66^{\circ}$ , or the limit of the high-stemmed forests. The area occupied by this zone in Eastern is still more extensive than in Western Siberia, namely, about 27,000 square geographical miles, and consists of a continuous mass of forest and morass, with only here and there, and that mainly in its southern part in the neighbourhood of the rivers, islets of small extent and narrow strips of land in a slight degree fit for the establishment of a settled population. The climatic conditions of this zone are also less favourable than in the corresponding zone of Western Siberia. The average temperature here is lower,  $-3$  instead of  $-2^{\circ}$  Celsius, the winters are more severe, having a mean temperature of  $-21^{\circ}$  instead of  $-20^{\circ}$ , the coldest month being  $-25^{\circ}$  instead of  $-23^{\circ}$ . Only the summer is somewhat warmer,  $15^{\circ}$  instead of  $14^{\circ}$ , the difference between summer and winter being therefore  $36^{\circ}$  instead of  $33^{\circ}$ , and that between the hottest and coldest months,  $43^{\circ}$  instead of  $40^{\circ}$ . From all this it appears that the climate presents a still more continental character than in the corresponding tract of Western Siberia. As for the mean temperature of the five-month

vegetative period it is here only  $11^{\circ}$  and proves extremely unfavourable to the development of agriculture, which here cannot be the main occupation of the inhabitants, but only a limited and occasional support to the forest industries. Further, in regard to the annual atmospheric precipitation falling to its share, the forest zone of Eastern is worse situated than that in Western Siberia; it here does not exceed 400 millimetres, of which moreover, half or 200 millimetres falls in the course of the three summer months.

The third or polar tundra zone is far more developed in Eastern than in Western Siberia, occupying as it does in the former an area 3.5 times that which it covers in the latter. With an extent of 24,000 square geographical miles it yields a wide field for the investigation of all the conditions of life upon the continents of the earth situated beyond the arctic circle. As a sample of the climatic conditions of this extreme north of the continent of the Old World, are the meteorological observations in one of the farthest habitable points on the Yenissei, the settlement called Tolsty Nos, lying in latitude  $70^{\circ}10'N$ . Here the mean annual temperature is only  $-13^{\circ}$ , and the mean winter temperature  $-30^{\circ}$ . The coldest month shows almost  $-34^{\circ}$ ; the mean summer temperature is  $+5^{\circ}$ , and that of the hottest month  $+9^{\circ}$ . There can be no question of the mean temperature of the vegetative period, as that is so brief that it excludes all possibility of even the thought of agriculture. Under such circumstances all this country can be exploited only by polar reindeer breeding tribes or by native or immigrant hunters or fishermen.

In Eastern as in Western Siberia, the flora of the country is extremely sensitive and reflects to a nicety its climatic conditions. The alpine and subalpine flora of the Sayan range has a great resemblance to that of the Altai, while at the same time exhibiting certain departures from it. Thus in the Alpine Sayan flora, appear certain polar forms not met with in the arctic zone of Europe and Western Siberia, but peculiar to the arctic zone of Eastern Siberia and America; many Altaic species vanish, which rise high on the Altai slope from the steppes of Central Asia, adjacent to that region, and on the other hand vegetable forms appear which do not occur at all in the Altai, but are either entirely local or common to the Sayan and the Stanovoi ranges, and even to the more remote Tian-Shan. To the latter forms belongs the prickly shrub with gray foliage and yellow flowers characteristic of the Alpine zone, known under the name of the camel's tail among the Tiurk tribes *Tiuek-uiriuik*, (*caragana jubata* Poir).

The flora of the Sayan slope, that is, of the cultivated or agricultural tract of Eastern Siberia also possesses essential distinctions from that of the Western Siberian lowland. Gmelin already noticed that on crossing the Yenissei the flora considerably alters. And in fact, to the east of the Yenissei not a few characteristic Siberian plants occur, not to be met with in the Western Siberian lowland. But this is explained not so much by any sharp change in the climatic conditions, which really does not exist, as by the circumstance that the slope of the Sayan ridge where it is intersected by the great Siberian tract, does not exhibit a flat low lying expanse like Western Siberia, but is scored by more or less elevated offshoots of the Sayan, by which its mountain flora pushes its way deep into the cultivated or agricultural zone of Eastern Siberia. Examples such as struck the eye of such an experienced naturalist as Gmelin might be quoted in large number. Thus, of the family of crow's

foots (ranunculaceae) beyond the Yenissei are met with for the first time: *thalictrum contortum* L., *anemone sibirica* L., *caltha natans* Pall.; of the fumitories (fumariaceae): *corydalis ambigua* Cham., *corydalis gracilis* Led.; of the crucifers (cruciferae): two species of *dontostemon*, *sisymbrium humile* Mey.; of the violets (violarieae): *viola dissecta* Led.; of the pea family (leguminosae): some *astragalus* (*oxytropis muricata* D.C., *brevirostre* D.C., *ammophila* Turcz., *grandistore* D.C., *leucantha* Pers., *caepitosa* Pers., *ampullata* Pers.). These latter are merely mountainous forms of the Altai-Sayan system, which have descended into the Siberian lowland on the right hilly bank of the Yenissei by means of the Sayan spurs.

Least difference of all is noticeable between the flora of the forest zone of Eastern and Western Siberia. The woody races are absolutely identical. Of the coniferous families the pine (*pinus sylvestris* L.), and the Siberian larch (*larix Ledebourii* Endl.) do not cross the boundary of the forest zone; but the remaining forms also pass over into the polar zone, becoming of course stunted, crooked and gradually losing their proper character of high-stemmed trees. Thus the Siberian fir (*pinus sibirica* Led.), attains on the Yenissei a height of 67·5° north latitude, the Siberian cedar (*pinus cembra* L.), 68·5°, the pitch pine (*picea orientalis* L.), 69·5°; finally the daur larch (*larix davurica* Fisch.) is found on the river Boganida as far north as 72·5°. As far as regards the herbaceous plants of the forest zone, it is not distinguished by any special differences from the like flora of the corresponding zone of Western Siberia, and is on the whole poor; in the thick forest growths there is no herbage, the soil being mainly carpeted with mosses and lichens.

Particularly typical on the other hand is the very limited flora of the far north of the polar tundra tract. Middendorf found on the Taimyr peninsula 124 plants, among which were the very lowest, it might be said, dwarf shrubs of the arctic species of birch (*betula nana* L.); willow, (*salix polaris* Wahl, *lanata* L., *glauca* L., *arctica* Pall., *taimyrensis* Trautv.), and also a *ledum*, (*ledum palustre* L.) and an *andromeda* (*cassiope tetragona* Don.); and of herbaceous plants, 17 species of cruciferae, 14 compositeae, 7 stellarieae, (*alsine*, *stellaria*, *cerastium*), 12 stonecrops (*saxifraga*), 6 species of *pedicularis*, 5 *astragals* (of the genera *phaca* and *oxytropis*), 5 *rosaceae* (*dryas*, *sieversia*, *potentilla*) and 6 crow's foots (*ranunculus*, *caltha*, *delphinium*). Of the 124 plants mentioned, 30 do not belong to the polar types, but are common to the whole of Siberia and for the most part cross over on the one side into Europe, and on the other into America. The remaining 94 plants are completely arctic types. Much more than half of them (54) are met with over the whole polar zone, alike of the Old and of the New World, and in part come forth upon the alps of the Altai Sayan range; but some are peculiar to Siberia alone (12), or only appear outside in Europe (10), or more frequently in America (18 species). To the latter, for example, belong of the crow's foots (ranunculaceae): *ranunculus affinis* R. Br.; of the crucifers, (cruciferae): *draba pauciflora* R. Br., *draba glacialis* Ad., *draba algida* Ad., *draba rupestris* R. Br., *hesperis Hookeri* Led., *sisymbrium sophioides* Hook.; of the caryophyllaceae (alsineae): *alsine macrocarpa* Fenzl., *alsine arctica* Fisch.; of the pea family (leguminosae): *oxytropis nigrescens* Fisch.; of the rosaceae: *sieversia glacialis* R. Br.; of the stone crops (saxifragaceae): *saxifraga serpyllifolia* Pursh. *punctata* L.; of the scrophulariaceae: *pedicularis Langsdorffi* Fisch., *pedicularis capitala* Ad.

The insect fauna follows on the whole the same laws as the flora, but in the Sayan range it is somewhat poorer than in the Altai, and on the slope presents less difference from the fauna of the Altai slope than does the flora. Highly eccentric arctic forms are met with among the coleoptera devoid of flight, as for example the carabidae: *carabus Baerii* Men., *lyperophorus cribellus* Men., *lyperophorus costatus* Men., *platysma borealis* Men. Not less peculiar are the following arctic forms of other categories of insects, of the moths (lepidoptera): *amphidasis un fasciata* Men.; of hymenoptera: *ichneumon Middendorffii* Er., *ichneumon figulus* Er.; of the diptera: *musca boganiidae* Er., *anthomya ursula* Er., *lispe frigida* Er., *nephrotoma aquilonia* Er.; of the neuroptera: *hemerobius algidus* Er.

As the forest and polar tundra zones in Eastern Siberia reach their full development the questions, having reference to the distribution of the vertebrates over Siberia, are most clearly answered by the study of these zones. At first sight it might be expected that in such deserted spots as are the forests and tundras of Siberia, where there is no regular hewing of timber, where there are not more than seven men living per square geographical mile, the fauna should be extraordinarily rich, if not in the variety of species, as in more southern countries, here opposed by climatic conditions, then at least in numbers. Unfortunately even in the forest zone the fauna of Siberia is very poor in both respects, and if the sportsman with gun in hand should traverse the whole forest zone of Siberia to its very heart, for example, to about 60° north latitude, he would be very much disenchanted by the fact that at times whole days would pass without his making any bag. In the unbroken and thick forest growths of Siberia, there are hardly any wild animals. They keep gladly to the skirts of the woods, the forest glades, to areas devastated by forest conflagrations, nay, even to the clearings wrought by man, near to his habitation, but not in the forest depths, and not in the forest thicket.

Such spots, free from trees and also convenient fords across rivers at certain seasons of the year, serve the wild animals as places of assembly, and the whole skill of the native trapper is confined to watching for them here at the right time, knowing these spots and the season of their frequenting by animals. This method of hunting explains also why the sparse population of the forest regions of Siberia, unable to exhaust its woody wealth, is gradually exhausting its animal life. This circumstance leads to the thought that the establishment of vast forest clearings or glades, hunters lands and the preservation of the animals assembling upon them at certain seasons of the year, might not only conduce to the preservation from destruction, but also to the increase of valuable races of animals.

Generally speaking in the forest and polar tundra zones of the whole of Siberia, which are comparatively so poorly endowed by nature, the natural riches are so scattered over the enormous surface in a thin and sparse layer, altogether wanting in some parts, that it is as difficult to collect them as it is to amass the separate grains of gold in auriferous strata, such work being only feasible when they have been agglomerated by accident or by nature or else by the ingenuity of man.

Passing on to the mammalia of the forest and polar tundra zones of Siberia, the few animals peculiar to the tundra region may be first of all described. The most arctic animal is the white bear, (*ursus maritimus* L.), properly an inhabitant of the islands of the Arctic Ocean; it is carried by the floating ice to the arctic shores of Siberia and is found, for



instance, at the mouth of the Yenissei where it was the first living creature seen by Nordenskjöld's expedition on the Siberian shore at the entrance of the gulf of Yenissei; it sometimes even reaches the settlement of Tolsty Nos, which is the first inhabited spot on the Yenissei from the ocean, but it does not penetrate further. Next come those arctic wild animals which almost exclusively inhabit the polar tundra region: the arctic fox, (*canis lagopus* L), found in the Taimyrsk peninsula under 75° northern latitude, and the small striped or Obi lemmings, (*myodes torquatus* and *myodes obensis*). There was formerly another large animal contemporaneous with mankind existing in the polar tundra region corresponding to the musk ox, (*bos moschatus*), which is found in the polar regions of America, but has now entirely disappeared; this Siberian ox (*bos pallasii*) was distinct from the American variety, but is only known by the skulls and bones found in the Taimyrsk tundras. Finally as characteristic animals of the tundras the northern hare, (*lepus variabilis* Pall.) and the reindeer, (*cervus tarandus* L), may be mentioned, although they spread far down into the forest zone. The latter is found in the mountainous parts of South Siberia; on the Urals it goes down south as far as 52° northern latitude, on the Altai to 49°, on the Sayan and Stanovoi chain to 53°, and in the Amour region it reaches the mouth of the Ussuri under 49° north latitude.

The rest of the mammalia dwelling in the Siberian plains may be regarded as animals of the forest zone, although many of them penetrate into the polar tundra region. These are the glutton, (*gulo borealis* Nilss.), the common bear, (*ursus arctus* L), the very rare sable, (*mustella zibellina* L), the ermine, (*mustella erminea* L), the Siberian weasel (*mustella sibirica* Pall.), the common weasel (*mustella vulgaris* Ertl.) the otter, (*lutra vulgaris*, Erkl.) although rare, the wolf, (*canis lupus* L), the fox, (*canis vulpes* L), the black variety being only peculiar to the extreme north, the lynx, (*felis lynx* L), the elk (*cervus alces* L), the flying squirrel, (*pteryomys volans* L), the common squirrel, (*sciurus vulgaris* L), the striped squirrel, (*tamias striatus* L) and some small species of rodents. Finally on the low mountain ridges intersecting the polar and forest regions of Eastern Siberia, for instance, on the Severma chain east of the Yenissei under 67° north latitude, and on the mountains following the current of the lower Tunguzka there are animals belonging to the mountain fauna, namely the mountain sheep, (*aegoceros montanus* Desm.) and the musk, (*moschus moschiferus* L.).

On the Altai-Sayan elevations in Eastern and particularly Western Siberia, there are naturally species of such mammals as are not found on the Siberian plains. These are the Alpine wolf, (*canis alpinus*, Pall), two races of large cats, (*felis irbis* Müll and *felis manul*), the chthonoergus alpinus, *spermophilus Eversmanni*, the alpine hare (*lagomys alpinus* Pall), the stag, (*cervus elaphus*) and others.

Birds, being more widely spread than any other vertebrates, are fairly plentiful in all three zones of Eastern and Western Siberia. The birds of prey, which are found as far as the Taimyr peninsula, are: one of the eagle tribe, probably *aquila albicilla* Bris. and a buzzard (*buteo lagopus*), two sorts of falcons, (*falco gyrfalco* L., *falco tinuncula* St.) and some bats, (*stryx brachyotus* Forst, *stryx nictea* L., *stryx funerea* Lath). The small birds, passerines, which nest far north in Siberia are some varieties of larks, (*alauda alpestris* L., *plectroph nivalis* L., *plectroph lapponica*, *emberhiza polaris* Mid., *fringilla linaria* L., *parus sibiricus* Pm., *motacilla alba* L). The fowls which are found partly in the polar zone and especially in the forest zone are partic-

ularly the *lagopus albus* L and *lagopus alpinus* Nilss., the heath cock, (*tetrao urogallus* L, *tetrao tetrix* L., and *tetrao bonasia* L.). There are numerous long-legged birds in Siberia, but principally of the same kinds as those in Europe. Siberia is however particularly rich in water fowls which nest in countless numbers on the shores of the Arctic Ocean and also on the banks of the rivers and lakes. On Lake Baikal the gulls are so numerous that the crags and rocks overhanging it are covered with a thick layer of guano which for a long time will serve as manure for the future generations of Siberian farmers. The remarkable 300th geographical phenomenon of Lake Baikal is the existence of a species of seal (*phoca baicalensis*), in the water of this inland sea.

The total population of Eastern Siberia, omitting the Yakutsk region, is about 900 thousand of both sexes, of whom not 8 per cent, as in Western Siberia, but 23 per cent are natives, the remaining 77 per cent being arrivals from Russia. The Mongolian tribe of Buriats is the most numerous indigenous race, settled here since the thirteenth century, when the world-renowned Kingdom of Chengis-Khan originated in Mongolia. The first Russian settlers, when first taking possession of the part they were about to colonize, during the seventeenth century, waged desperate war with the Buriats, which ended in their being completely subdued at the end of that century. At present there are about 160,000 Buriats of both sexes, exclusively inhabiting the agricultural zone of Eastern Siberia. Their principal occupation is cattle breeding; they are of the Buddhist faith and are only partly engaged in agriculture. The space covered by the Buriat camps is limited, and they are in reality but half-nomadic, whilst part of them already lead a settled life. About 20 per cent of them have been converted to christianity and have become to a great extent russianized. The most northern Buriats still adhere to shamanism. It is a remarkable fact that the Buriats do not exhibit any tendency to die out, but on the contrary increase at almost the same rate as the Russian population.

The Turco-Finnish tribes form another indigenous element, known by the collective name of Tartars. They number about 22 thousand and dwell exclusively at the foot of the Sayan mountains in the Yenisseisk government. The celebrated Russian savants and authorities on Finnish and Tiurks dialects, Kastren and Radlov, studied their language and proved that it was undoubtedly allied to the Finnish. The Finnish tribes were at one time spread over all the continent from the Sayan chain through Western Siberia, the Urals and the plains of Russia in Europe as far as the Gulfs of Finland and of Bothnia and the Baltic Sea. In the country at the foot of the Sayan mountains the subjection of this race to the Tiurksk tribe in Erghene-Kona has transformed them into the so-called Tartars. The Tartars of Eastern Siberia have, however, already adopted a settled mode of life; the majority of them have been converted to christianity and become russianized; the gradual progress of their assimilation is still further facilitated by their decreasing numbers, which were never very large. The third indigenous element is composed of a mixed collection inhabiting the forest and polar zones of Eastern Siberia consisting of 3,000 Tungues, 1,000 Jakuts and about 4,000 Ostiak-Samoyedes, forming a native population of 8,000 leading a nomadic life in the forest and polar tundra zones.

The greater part of the population of Eastern Siberia, over 770 thousand of both sexes inhabit the cultivated zone at the foot of the mountains where the density of population

amounts to 73 per square mile, being almost equal to that of the Altai mining district with which it has the greatest similarity. The indigenous population is however much larger and amounts to 21 per cent, as this region was inhabited by the Mongolian tribe of Buriats as early as the thirteenth century. The population of those districts comprising the wood industry zone of Eastern Siberia, excepting the Touroukhansk district, the southern part of which may be annexed to the forest zone, amounts to 120 thousand of both sexes, or about 7 per square mile, which is comparatively still less than that of the forest zone of Western Siberia and is due to unfavourable conditions. The whole of the Touroukhansk region does not contain more than 9,000 inhabitants, and of these over 90 per cent are natives, which is sufficient to show that the polar tundra zone is entirely unsuitable for a settled population.

In Eastern Siberia the relative population of the towns is somewhat higher than in the west, and amounts to 10.5 per cent; this clearly shows that agricultural colonization is less developed. The population of the regular towns is as follows: Irkutsk 44 thousand, Krasnoyarsk 15 thousand, Minussinsk 10 thousand souls.

The distribution of domestic animals depends upon the density, mode of life and distribution of the inhabitants, and in this respect the conditions of Eastern and Western Siberia are very similar. In the former there are 72 horses for every 100 inhabitants, or 3 to 4 horses for every grown man, in all 640,000 horses, or more than in Western Siberia. There is a still greater proportion of large-horned cattle, namely, 70 head for every 100 inhabitants, or 630,000 head of cattle in all, which amount to no less than 3 cows per every married couple, whilst in Western Siberia there are only 52 per 100 inhabitants. The proportion of small cattle is still more favourable in the east being 135 per 100 inhabitants, or over 1,200,000 head, and in Western Siberia it is only 85 per 100 inhabitants. This difference is explained by the fact that cattle raising is in a high state of development among the Buriats who number 18 per cent of the total population of Eastern Siberia. As regards the reindeer, the total number of head of this species does not exceed 34 thousand in Eastern Siberia, as there are very few breeders, not more than about 6 thousand. The number of reindeer is about the same as in Western Siberia or 600 for every 100 inhabitants. The draught dogs are of great use to the inhabitants of the polar tundra zone. These animals are sharp-nosed, with elevated ears and downy hair; they are of different colours, white, black, spotted, gray and brown; they never bark, are very hardy and strong, with a fine scent, and are satisfied with a very small amount of most unappetizing food. They are harnessed in numbers from 3 to 11, without any reins or bridles, with one dog as an outrunner to show the way, the driver being only provided with an iron-pointed rod which serves as a break. Each dog will draw a load of 3 pounds; they run in harness at a speed of 10 to 15 versts per hour. The outrunning dogs are the most highly prized and they cost from 60 to 70 roubles apiece.



## CHAPTER IV.

**The Yakutsk Frontier Country.**

Orographic and hydrographic review; division into two regions or zones, the region of high-stemmed trees and forest industries with a mixture of cattle raising and the polar tundra zone; the climatic conditions of each of these regions; vegetation and fauna; composition and distribution of the population; the natives of the Yakutsk border land; the Arctic Ocean, its islands, flora and fauna.

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**T**O the east, south-east and south-west of Siberia proper, which has just been described, stretch enormous tracts of land which have as yet been but little touched by Russian civilization, and which may be termed the border lands of Siberia.

The most extensive of these is the Yakutsk frontier country. It consists exclusively of the Yakutsk region which is under the administration of the Governor-Generalship of Irkutsk, formerly that of Eastern Siberia. With regard to its geographical position the Yakutsk border land occupies a large part of the country watered by the gigantic river Lena and also the basins of some of the smaller tributaries of the Northern Ocean, such as the Olenek, the Yana, the Indighirka, the Alazea and the Kolyma. Its surface covers the enormous area of 70 thousand square geographical miles; this considerably exceeds that of the governments of Yenisseisk and Irkutsk taken together, or that part of Siberia proper called Eastern Siberia. It is bounded on the south-east and east for more than 3,000 miles by the Stanovoi or Yablonoi mountains, which throughout the whole of their length serve as a barrier between the waters flowing from the north-western side into the Northern Ocean, and those flowing from the south-east and east into the Okhotsk and Behring Sea of the Pacific. The Stanovoi or Yablonoi chain is not very elevated, the summits of Kogahin, Gonam and the road leading to the prison of Udsk have an altitude of 2,500 to 4,000 feet above the level of the sea, whilst some of the highest peaks have an elevation of 5,000 to 7,000 feet. On the Stanovoi chain and the mountains adjoining it, as for instance the Verkhnoyarsk chain, not only do the numerous branches of the large straight tributaries of the Lena, like the Olekma and Aldan, take their rise, but also those of the ocean rivers, the Yana, the Indighirka and the Kolyma. The Lena itself rises in the borders of Eastern Siberia in the Baikal mountain range, the summits of which, as for instance the Vetkin peak, are not more than 4,200 feet above the level of the sea. The outlying mountains of the Stanovoi chain, stretch-

ing into the Zabaikalsk region between the Vitim and the Olekma, have some summits as high as this. Generally speaking, the whole of the Yakutsk region is not such a continuous plain as a large portion of Western Siberia, and is even far less level than the forest and tundra belts of Eastern Siberia. The whole of the southern part of the Yakutsk region, south of the latitude where the Lena blends with the Aldan, is indeed fairly mountainous, and north of this latitude there are also many chains of mountains. Those to the east of the Lena, such as the Verkhnoyansk chain, which separates the Aldan from the sources of the Yana and Indighirka, the mountains of Kolymsk, Alazeysk, Tak-Tayakhtakh are all more or less connected with the Yablonoi chain, whilst those chains stretching to the west of the Lena, like the Viluisk range and the summit dead levels of the Vilui and the Olenek, are distinct independent upheavals.

The geognostic composition of the mountains of the Yakutsk region is principally made up of crystalline formations, granites, syenites, diorites, diabases, gneiss, crystalline schists and sometimes porphyries and even trichytes, whilst in the Aldansk range, besides these crystalline formations, there are also volcanic rocks such as basalts and dolerites. The slopes and outlying parts of the Stanovoi chain and other ranges in the Yakutsk region like the Viluisk mountains are principally composed of upheaved sedimentary strata, partly belonging to the paleozoic formations, upper silurian, devonian and carboniferous, but more especially to the secondary formations, particularly the jurassic and partly to the tertiary. The Yakutsk region is well endowed with mineral wealth.

The silver-lead ores, iron and coal, found in the Stanovoi mountains, are well diffused over the Yakutsk region but the auriferous sand is the only substance worked, particularly the rich deposits near the river Olekma and some other tributaries of the Lena.

The Yakutsk region is abundantly watered by magnificent full rivers which are in summer the only means of communication. The gigantic Lena is 4,300 versts long and with its tributaries, the Vitim, Olekma, Aldan and Vilui, forms one of the richest river systems of the Old World, watering an area of over 43 thousand square geographical miles. Unfortunately the Lena system possesses even to a greater extent the same disadvantages as the systems of the Yenesei and Obi, as they all flow to the north and fall into the Arctic Ocean, which cannot be navigated with any regularity. It is also made up of two enormous component branches, the Lena and the Aldan, which meet still farther north than the branches of the Obi, in a country quite unsuitable to settled cultured life. Besides this the mouth of the Lena does not form a wide, open estuary like the mouth of the Yenesei, or a large gulf like the Obi, but an enormous delta, projecting into the Arctic Ocean, which with its labyrinth of islands, intersected by numerous channels, makes the mouth of the Lena far less accessible from the sea than that of the Yenesei. The other large rivers falling into the Arctic Ocean, the Yana and Indighirka, also have a tendency to form deltas.

The climate of the Yakutsk region is the most continental of the Arctic and sub-Arctic zones of the Old World. It may be divided into two regions or belts, the one corresponding to the region of high-stemmed trees, forest industries and sporadic agriculture of Eastern and Western Siberia, and the other to the polar tundra belt of reindeer breeding and dog-conveyance. The first region comprises the districts of Yakutsk, Olekminsk and a large southern

portion of that of Viluisk, and the second consists of the districts of Verkhoyansk, Kolýmnsk and the basins of the Olenek and Lena below Zhigansk in the Viluisk and Yakutsk districts. The first, south-western zone, has an area of 38 thousand square geographical miles, the second, north-eastern zone, covers 32 thousand. Taken from four points of observation situated in the first part of the Yakutsk region, the mean yearly temperature is about  $-8^{\circ}$  Cel., the mean winter temperature is  $-33^{\circ}$ , that of the coldest month  $-36^{\circ}$ , the mean summer temperature  $+15^{\circ}$ , that of the hottest month  $+17^{\circ}$ ; the difference between the temperatures of winter and summer is  $48^{\circ}$ , the difference between the coldest and hottest months is  $53^{\circ}$ ; that is to say, the climate is far more continental than that of the neighbouring forest zone of Eastern Siberia. Under these climatic conditions, the soil which the sun's rays do not penetrate to a greater depth than three-fourths of an arshine, is always frozen. Nevertheless the mean temperature of the five-months period of vegetation is  $+11^{\circ}$ , and even  $+12^{\circ}$  in Olekminsk and Yakutsk, whilst the high summer temperature of  $+15^{\circ}$  during the powerful insolation of the short summer period permits of sporadic agriculture in some parts of this portion of the Yakutsk region.

One of the cold poles of the northern hemisphere is situated in the north-eastern polar-tundra part of the Yakutsk frontier country. Thus, in Verkhoyansk under  $67^{\circ} 34'$  north latitude the mean yearly temperature falls to  $-17^{\circ}$  Cel.; the mean winter temperature is  $-47^{\circ}$ , that of the coldest month  $-49^{\circ}$  Cel., whilst the mean summer temperature hardly exceeds  $+13^{\circ}$  and that of the hottest month  $+15^{\circ}$ ; the difference of temperature between winter and summer is  $60^{\circ}$ , and between the hottest and coldest months  $64^{\circ}$ ; this is a type of the most continental climate in the Old World. Three and a half degrees farther north at Ustiansk, under  $70^{\circ} 53'$  north latitude, the climate is already milder. The mean yearly temperature exceeds  $-16^{\circ}$  Cel.; the winter temperature is  $-37^{\circ}$  Cel.; that of the coldest month is  $-41^{\circ}$ ; the summer temperature is  $+9^{\circ}$ , and that of the hottest month  $+13$ ; the difference between the temperatures of winter and summer is only  $47^{\circ}$ , and that between the hottest and coldest months  $54^{\circ}$ . On the other hand the mean temperature of the five-months period of vegetation, which in Verkhoyansk hardly exceeds  $8^{\circ}$ , does not amount to more than  $3^{\circ}$  at Ustiansk, or in other words, the mean temperature of  $9^{\circ}$  lasts about five months at Verkhoyansk and only three months at Ustiansk.

At the mouth of the Lena, at Sagastyr, where there was for nearly two years a meteorological station of the Russian Imperial Geographical Society, the climatic conditions are still more unfavourable. The mean temperature (below  $-17^{\circ}$ ), the winter temperature ( $-36^{\circ}$ ) and that of the coldest month ( $-42^{\circ}$ ) at Sagastyr are closely approximate to those of Ustiansk, but the mean summer temperature of less than  $+3^{\circ}$ , and that of the hottest month of less than  $+5^{\circ}$ , place all organic life under the most unfavourable conditions of existence, especially as at a depth of 0.8 metre the soil never thaws and in winter has a temperature below  $-20^{\circ}$  Cel. Under these circumstances, cultured life in the polar tundra zone of the Yakutsk frontier country is quite impossible. At Yakutsk in the forest zone the Lena is clear of ice during 160 days in the year, whilst at Ustiansk the Yana is only clear during 100 days. The climate of the south-western forest part of the Yakutsk region is also less favourable than that of East Siberia, with reference to the amount of rainfall

during the year, which only amounts to 310 millimetres compared to 360 millimetres deposited in the forest zone of Eastern Siberia. The winters are also less snowy (38 millimetres against 56); the summer rainfall is however almost the same in both places. According to observations made at Sagastyr near the mouth of the Lena, there is very little moisture deposited in the polar tundra zone, not more than 86 millimeters in the year, 45 millimeters of which fall during the three summer months, which clearly shows the extremely continental nature of the climate of the Yakutsk frontier country, and especially of its north-eastern portion.

The vegetation of the south-western part of the Yakutsk region differs in general but little from that of Eastern Siberia. The trees are the same as those of Siberia proper and only outside the borders of the Yakutsk region on the south-western slopes of the Stanovoi range there exist certain varieties which disappear in Siberia as soon as the Ural mountains are reached. Generally speaking, the zone of forests of full grown trees and forest industries in the Yakutsk frontier country is completely covered with continuous, dense and often impenetrable forests and extensive morasses above which rise, in some places, little islands from the surface of the sea, barren mountain heights either connected in chains or standing isolate and bare.

The flora of the grasses in the forest zone is naturally poor in the thick of the woods where grass hardly grows at all, but in the forest glades and clearings and on the open marshes, river banks, mountain slopes and rocks, the flora is rich and characterized by local plants which make their appearance beyond the Yenessei along the mountain slopes of the Sayan chain and spreading over all the mountain ranges intersecting the Yakutsk frontier country. These plants include, for instance, some of the spear-wort family, namely, three varieties of *thalichtrum*, (*petaloideum* L., *rufinerve*, L. et *sparsiflorum* Turcz), two anemones (*anemone Sibirica* L., and *pulsatilla davurica* Spr.), chickweed (*caltha natans* Pall), *isopyrum fumarioides*, L. two *aquilegiae* (*aquilegia sibirica* Lm and *parviflora* Led.), one variety of larkspur, (*delphinium grandiflorum* L.), three kinds of aconites (*aconitum volubile* Pall., *villosum* Rech., *Kusnetzovi* Turcz.); some of the plants found here only grow within the borders of the Yakutsk frontier country, like *delphinium crassicaule* Led and others, and are American types like *ranunculus Purshii* Hook and *affinis* R. Br. and other numerous families of plants. The polar tundra zone is of a very different character; in summer the tundras are free from snow but the soil is always frozen to a depth of half an arshine below the surface and consists of alternate layers of earth and ice. In these strata besides the semi-fossil sea shells, of types still existing in the Arctic Ocean, bones and skeletons and even bodies of extinct animals of Northern Siberia are found, such as the mammoth and rhinoceros, often in an excellent state of preservation.

The surface vegetation of the tundras consists principally of moss, of the *polytrichum*, *bryum* and *hypnum* varieties. From underneath the dark brown surface, grass crops up in places, here and there forming grass plots, but more oftet growing in seperate patches on the bare clay soil. This kind of grass flora not only closely resembles that of the corresponding parts of Siberia proper but is also much like the flora of Western Europe. Thus, out of 92 distinctly flowering plants collected by Nordenskjöld's expedition, at their winter quarters beyond the eastern extremity of the Yakutsk frontier country, but still on the shore

of the Arctic Ocean, more than two-thirds, namely 63, were varieties common to the Arctic zone of Europe but not descending into Russia in Europe; 17 were American varieties also common to the arctic zone of Siberia, but not known in European Russia, whilst 12 were exclusively Siberian arctic forms. Very few of these latter are peculiar only to the north-eastern corner of Siberia. The first vernal plant which flowered near Nordenskjöld's winter quarters was the spoonwort (*cochlearia fenestrata* R. Br.). This happened on the 23rd of June, new style, and only a week after this, about July 1, did nature thoroughly awake, the tundras became green, flowers blossomed and insects made their appearance, first of all flies and then coleoptera, amongst which there were two rather large kinds of cockchafers (*carabus*, *C. truncatipennis* Esch.). The local flora is characterized by the large amount of gramineous plants, which in some place form a continuous sward. There were in all 13 different kinds found and amongst these the original varieties were *glyceria vilfoidea* Th. Fr., *Gl. vaginata* I. Lge, *arctophylla effusa* I. Lge. There are plenty of bushes of different kinds of low polar willows, the rarer varieties being *salix chamissonis* And., *salix cuneata* Trautv., and *salix boganidensis* Trautv.

The fauna of both zones of the Yakutsk region also closely resemble that of the corresponding zones of Eastern Siberia, but the fur animals are more abundant and of a better quality, probably because the outline of the Yakutsk frontier country is more varied and the mountains and rocks which rise above the forests afford more free spaces for the species of this region. In describing the animals which at present inhabit the forest and tundra zones of the Yakutsk frontier country it is impossible to ignore those varieties which are now extinct in these zones of Siberia. The genus elephant (*elephas primigenius* Bl) at a recent geological epoch, when man already existed, inhabited the whole of the palearctic zone of the northern hemisphere and, in contrast to the southern Indian elephants, it was covered with thick, long, red hair. A splendidly preserved specimen of a whole mammoth with perfect skin and hair was lately found in the polar tundra zone of the Yakutsk frontier country, and in 1892 a special expedition was sent by the Academy of Sciences to examine it. The two varieties of the rhinoceros (*rhinoceros antiquitatis* Blumb. and *rhinoceros Maerckii* Jäg.), which flourished here at the same period, are no less interesting. They are discovered under the same conditions as the mammoths; a fine head of one of these animals, found in the southern part of the Yakutsk region, is preserved in the Academy of Sciences having been presented by the Siberian Section of the Russian Geographical Society.

As regards the population of the Yakutsk region, which has been in the possession of the Russians since the seventeenth century, the number and composition of the inhabitants clearly show how little this country is suitable for settled colonization. The total population does not exceed 250 thousand of both sexes, of which the Russian element only numbers 15 thousand or about 6.5 per cent, the remaining 93.5 per cent being made up of other tribes. The greater part of these are the Yakuts, numbering about 220 thousand; they are of Tiurksk origin, their language is a Tiurksk dialect with a mixture of Mongolian words. They have preserved all their ethnographical features to a remarkable extent, type, language, manners and customs and even dress. This Tiurksk tribe was driven to the far north by the Mongolians at the time when their rule in Central Asia was supreme. Whilst preserving a nomadic



form of life the Yakuts however adapted themselves to the hard conditions of life of the northern forest zone and, exchanging the grassy steppes of Central Asia for the forests and tundras, they became a race of hunters and cattle breeders. Cattle rearing is however their chief occupation, after which come hunting and fishing and lastly agriculture, which is but little developed. The Russians, being weak in numbers, have not had an influence upon the Yakuts, except in converting the greater part of them to christianity, but even this conversion is more apparent than real as the Yakuts are still to a very great extent addicted to shamanism, and their former faith. The Tungues lead almost the same form of life as the Yakuts and number over 10 thousand of both sexes. The other races inhabiting the Yakutsk frontier country, counting about 3,000 men, consist of polar tribes like the Lamuts, Ukagirs, Tchuktchis, Tchuvantsis and Koryaks. These tribes principally occupy the north-eastern polar tundra portion of the country.

The population is very unevenly distributed between the two zones of the Yakutsk frontier country; whilst the region of high forest trees, forest industries and sporadic agriculture has 230 thousand inhabitants of both sexes, or about 6 men per square geographical mile; the population of the polar tundra region does not exceed 20 thousand, or about 6 men for every 10 square geographical miles, and is entirely composed of other tribes, as the Russian population principally dwells in the forest zone and the towns. The people of the towns do not however exceed 8,000 of both sexes, or rather more than 3 per cent of the total population of this region, and indeed all the towns with the exception of Yakutsk, which has 6,000 inhabitants, are nothing more than small Russian settlements serving as points of support for the Russian rule in the country. In these settlements in the zone of high forest trees the Russians occupy themselves to some extent with agriculture and partly with cattle breeding, but their occupations in the polar tundra zone do not differ from those of the natives. It is a remarkable fact that, whilst the Russian population of Siberia proper, living under conditions of life approaching those of its native land, has not only gradually increased in numbers, far exceeding the native tribes, but has succeeded to a great extent in assimilating them and even in the Amour-littoral and Kirghiz steppe regions has preserved intact all the national qualities and appearance, here in the Yakutsk frontier country under the heavy yoke of nature the Russian settlers seem to have deviated from their nationality. Placed under the most unfavourable conditions for civilization, they have in some places assimilated themselves with the native tribes and, adopting their mode of life, have descended to their level. This is particularly the case with the population of Verkhoyansk, Ustiansk, Zashiversk, upper, middle and lower Kolymsk, and naturally, mixed marriages with the natives have greatly contributed to this state of things.

The distribution of domestic animals is closely connected with that of the inhabitants over the surface of the country, and with their mode of life and their relation to the ground upon which they dwell. In the Yakutsk frontier country there are more than 50 horses per every 100 inhabitants, or 130 thousand horses in all, or about the same quantity as in Western Siberia, but the quantity of large-horned cattle, 260 thousand beasts in all, exceeds 100 head per 100 inhabitants or more than double the quantity in Western Siberia, and one and a half times more than in Eastern Siberia; this amounts to 5 head of horned cattle per every

married couple, and clearly shows that the Yakuts are a cattle rearing people of the steppes of Central Asia, accidentally driven to the forest zone of the cruel north. The transition of the most northern Yakuts to reindeer breeding in a region unsuited to horned cattle and horses, confirms this theory. The reindeer in the polar tundra zone number about 50 thousand head, or about 200 head for every 100 inhabitants of reindeer breeding population. Small animals are not raised in the Yakutsk region except the dogs used for travelling in the polar tundra zone, which are kept by the indigenous tribes in even greater numbers than in Eastern Siberia.

All that has been said about the Yakutsk frontier country, where there is no regular agricultural zone, clearly shows that this region has but very little importance for settled Russian colonization and that this most extensive portion of Siberia is destined by nature itself to be inhabited by wandering or nomadic tribes or by those who from time immemorial have been aborigines of polar countries, hyperboreans or nomads, who have found their way hither from the plains of Central Asia and succeeded somehow in acclimating themselves in the forest zone of the north. This region can be of only one use to Russia, on account of the impossibility of peopling it by means of settled agricultural colonization, which was effected under such favourable circumstances in the agricultural zone of Siberia proper and in the country round about the Altai mountains; the Yakutsk region might, like British America, excepting Canada, be organized for working the natural riches of the country which, without doubt, exist there but they are distributed, as has been already mentioned, in scanty and scattered layers over the enormous surface of the coldest land of the Old World.

There is no positive evidence to show that the stranger tribes of the Yakutsk region are decreasing in numbers, or in other words dying out; but of late years this opinion has been expressed by people well acquainted with Siberia. If this only referred to the small polar tribes of the Yakutsk frontier country, such as the Lamuts, Ukagirs, Koryaks, Tchouvans and Tchuktchis it would be highly probable. Before the arrival of the Yakuts these tribes were spread much more to the south and occupied a far greater expanse of country, and on being driven from their former place of habitation by the Yakuts they congregated about the north-east polar tundra part of the Yakutsk frontier country and the Chukotsk peninsula. Every country has, however, a limit of capacity in relation to the population inhabiting it, depending upon the conditions of climate and soil and the state of culture of the inhabitants, and the frozen tundras, inhabited only by hunters presents the most limited accommodations for population in all the continent of the Old World. When once this limit was reached, which happened as soon as the numerous Yakuts who occupied the land drove the aborigines to the north-east into the polar tundra zone, these aborigines ought to evince symptoms of dying out, as the country in which they were congregated was not, with their means of procuring food, capable of nourishing them. There is yet another argument in favour of the Yakuts. The forest zone affords far greater capacity for population than the tundras, and this capacity was considerably further increased when the Yakuts arrived, in virtue of the difference of their state of culture from that of the former aborigines of the country, as every country has greater capacity for a race of cattle breeders than of hunters. The Yakuts, therefore, having driven out the natives into the polar tundra zone, had ample space in the

forest zone of the Yakutsk frontier country and their dying out could only arise from their being unable to accommodate themselves with the conditions of the country and acclimate themselves. But this was not the case, as they became indigenous, and the occupation of the country by the Russians did not in any way deteriorate their position. The Russian settlers, whose number does not exceed 6·5 per cent of the indigenous population, congregated together in a few spots of this region and could not in any way oppress the Yakuts who have up to late years shown a natural increase. But the lives of nations, living, not as cultured people, but as children of nature (*naturvölker*) are sometimes visited by scourges of nature which they are not in a condition to withstand. Epidemics like small pox, epizootic which destroys the principal means of existence of cattle breeding races, or temporary scarcity of wild animals or fish can all tend to decrease the population during certain periods, and when these evils are removed it again shows signs of increasing. However the question as to whether a temporary decrease in the population has brought about the idea that the natives of the Yakutsk frontier country are dying out, or whether a cattle breeding race inhabiting a forest country, not entirely corresponding to their pursuits, has attained the limit of capacity of the country, can only be decided by the future.

To the north of the shore of Siberia proper and the borderland of Yakutsk stretches the boundless surface of the Arctic Ocean. This cannot be regarded as being perfectly smooth, not only because in many places more or less elevated islands or groups of islands rise out of it, but also because during nearly the whole year, except short and irregular periods, the surface of the ocean is covered with ice. If it were not for this ice, which is an insurmountable barrier against navigation, and if the plains of Siberia as they gradually approach the ocean were not transformed into barren tundras, from which not only is forest vegetation banished but even all forms of organic life, and if the mouths of the Siberian rivers were not ice bound during the greater part of the year, then the geographical position of Siberia would be most brilliant for ocean communication and universal trade.

Unfortunately the whole of the Arctic Ocean along the coast of Siberia is blocked with ice during the greater part of the year. It is true that along the whole of the Asiatic from the Yugorsky Sound to Cape Dezhnev at the entrance to the Behring Sea there are no glaciers descending into the sea, so that there are but very few icebergs on the coast of Siberia and those which are formed are very small, rarely more than 100 or 150 feet high; but in winter the surface of the sea is covered with ice, and there is hardly an open space to be found along the whole of the Siberian coast. In winter the ice is often more than 9 feet thick and the pressure of ice forms heaps of blocks piled up to a height of 60 or 70 feet. When the wind is fresh the falling snow causes fearful snowdrifts and snowstorms. During such snowstorms tongue-shaped crests are formed upon the surface of the snow running parallel with the direction of the predominating winds from west-north-west to east-south-east and thus serve as a compass to guide travellers. During hard frosts numerous chasms are formed in the ice through which water penetrates in spring and promotes the thawing and breaking up of the ice in an astonishing degree.

On the coast of Siberia the ice begins to break up at the end of June, but further out at sea it often lasts until the end of July. During the rest of the summer, however,

blocks of ice of various sizes, partly the remains of the winter covering of the sea, and partly carried down by the large Siberian rivers, are carried by the winds and the currents over the ocean and collect sometimes in one place and sometimes in another without having any regular egress to the southern waters. The pressure of water carried by the Gulfstream doubling Nova Zembla forms a contrary current in the Sea of Kara, carrying the ice of this sea through the Kara Straits and Waigach Sound and thus completely clearing it before the autumn. This enables ships to penetrate through Matochkin Shar, a narrow sound, separating the two islands of Nova Zembla, into the Sea of Kara, and, if it be clear of ice, to reach the gulf of Yenesseisk and make a return voyage the same autumn. This however is not always possible and ships cannot rely upon reaching and leaving the gulf of Yenessei the same autumn. The ice, covering the enormous expanse of ocean between the mouth of the Yenessei and Cape Dezhnev, has no other outlet than through some of the sounds of the unknown polar lands to the shores of Greenland, and then along this coast to the south. At all events this was the course taken by the ice upon which the crew of the lost American ship *Jeanette* accidentally left the things they had cast away and which were eventually found off the coast of Greenland. Naturally this circuitous route does not completely ensure the egress of the ice, formed off the Siberian shores, into more southern latitudes where it would be quite melted. For this reason the route through the Arctic Ocean from European seas to the mouth of the Lena and especially to the Behring Straits is by no means sure, and although Nordenskjöld's expedition on the *Vega*, for the first time in the history of navigation, penetrated through the ice of the Arctic Ocean from the seas of Europe to the Pacific Ocean, this can at present be only regarded as a stroke of luck, the difficulty of the undertaking being shown by the fact that through a few days delay on the road the *Vega* was still obliged to pass the winter on the coast of the Chukotsk Peninsula, and was only able to leave winter quarters and, doubling Cape Dezhnev, get out into the adjacent Behring Straits by the 20th of July of the following year. In the same way Dezhnev who discovered the sound dividing Siberia from America, called after him in 1647, was unable to double the Cape in that year and only succeeded in doing so in 1648.

There are not many islands along the Siberian coast to the east of the large double island of Nova Zembla. It is unnecessary to describe such islands as the White, Sibirakov and Taimur, and likewise those formed by the deltas of the Lena, Yana and Indighirka, all of which are adjacent to the continent, but those which are further from the coast, like Wrangel's land and the group of New Siberia Islands, are quite worthy of mention.

Wrangel's land is an island quite uninvestigated by the Russians and only a little known by the American whalers. The Americans have doubled it from the north and shown that its dimensions do not exceed those of the New Siberian Islands, and from which it does not apparently differ in its physical conditions.

The New-Siberian group is well known to the Russians and consists of three large islands, Kotelnoi, Fadievskoi and New Siberia lying in the open sea to the north-east of the delta of the Lena, and a few smaller ones situated like Liakhov Island and others nearer to Cape Sviatoi. Further to the north beyond the islands of Nova Zembla, the American expedition of the lost *Jeanette* discovered some other small islands, but the three large

New Siberians are the only ones visited by Russian traders and inhabitants of the polar tundra zone. These islands are generally reached in spring before the thawing of the ocean ice, and the traders drive over the frozen surface of the sea on light sledges drawn by reindeer or dogs and, passing the short summer on the islands, return home in autumn when the ice has again set on the surface of the sea. The Siberian traders are generally drawn to these islands by the quantity of mammoth bones found there. The New Siberian Islands are of great importance from a scientific point of view as they form a vast and interesting cemetery of the whole organic world, as it at one time existed under 75° and 76° of north latitude. This organic world not only consisted of the large extinct animals like the mammoth, two varieties of the rhinoceros, buffalo, muskox, three varieties of deer and even a breed of horses, but also of the numerous trunks of extinct trees belonging to the middle tertiary, miocene formations, allied to the genus of deciduous trees peculiar to the temperate zone and not growing at present in any part of Siberia, like the elm and hazel.

The unusual abundance of skeletons and remains of extinct animals and plants in the New Siberian Islands is due to the conditions of the soil consisting of post-tertiary strata with intermittent layers of pure ice, spread over such an enormous area that if, for example, the temperature of the air upon the island of New Siberia rose for a prolonged period above zero, except the four mountains forming its framework, consisting of masses of granite that have abruptly raised the rocky strata of the jurassic formation, the whole island would become converted into a liquid paste, which together with the fossil remains included in it, would become the prey of the waves. At the present time the flora and fauna alike of the New Siberian islands are extremely meagre. In the whole summer passed during the years 1885 and 1886 by the members of the Academy Expedition, Doctor Bunge and Baron Toll, upon the New Siberian islands, there were but few days when it was possible to make any collections of flowering plants or live insects. One or two clear and comparatively warm days alternated with cold and cloudy weather, and the living vegetable covering again disappeared beneath a layer of snow. Upon the rocks of the lesser New Siberian islands, Stolbovoi and Liakhov, past which Nordenskjöld's expedition went in the second half of August, the weather being fine and the sea perfectly free from ice, comparatively few birds were nesting and the neighbouring sea shewed no traces of large marine animals.

But however unfavourable the climatic conditions of the Siberian littoral of the Arctic Ocean, it cannot be said that its depths are absolutely devoid of life. The deep ocean flora consists of seaweeds (algae), of which in the whole of the shore waters of the Arctic Ocean, thanks to the careful investigations of Nordenskjöld's expedition, 35 species were found, among them 16 belonging to the family of the fucoideae and 12 to that of the florideae. At the same time the seaweeds of the Siberian shore are far from attaining the luxuriant development and the vast dimensions which are as a rule proper to the algae of the polar seas. On the other hand seaweeds are almost entirely absent from the immediate coast zone of the Siberian sea. The marine flora attains its highest development at some distance from the shore in the sub-littoral zone, and only there in some few spots, as for example around the island of Tajmyr are to be found localities rich in seaweeds.

The Siberian coast of the Arctic Ocean has no lack of marine animals. Of the lower animals, Nordenskjöld's expedition found near the mouth of the Kolyma cup-shaped sponges,

around the shores of the Taimyr peninsula and cape Cheliuskin, extremely beautiful forms of marine star-fish, *antedon Eschrichtii* J. Müll., and *ophiacantha bidentata* Retz, and near the winter quarters of the expedition, the star-fish (*ophioglypha nodosa* Lütaen). The Arctic Ocean is incomparably richer in species of molluscs and crustaceans. The species of the latter, as for example, *idothea entomon* L. and *idothea Sabinei* Kr., are met with in large quantities even where organic life in general is poor, as for example near the delta of the Lena. Further to the east and nearer to Behring Straits small crayfish (*sabinea septemcarinata* Seb.) and species of crabs (*chionoecoetes opilis* Kr.) are met with.

As regards vertebrates, the Arctic Ocean is fairly rich in different kinds of fish, ascending the full-streamed rivers of the ocean basin. The Siberian rivers possess a particularly large number of kinds of gwiniad (*corregonus*), among which are the nelma (*corregonus leucichtis*), peliad (*corregonus peled*), chir (*corregonus nasutus*), omul (*corregonus omul*), muksun (*corregonus muksun*), pechora gwiniad (*corregonus polkur*), et cetera. The dorse (*gadus navaga* Koerl.) and smelt (*asmerus eperlanus*) breed in considerable quantities in the Arctic Ocean. But special interest is attached to the black fish (*dallia delicatissima* Sm.) newly discovered by Nordenskjöld's expedition and possessing an exquisite taste, with which the Chukches have been acquainted from the earliest times. As for the marine mammals, they are of course the same as in all the polar seas, namely various kinds of seals (*phoca barbata*, *hispida*, *cristata*, *leporina*, *groenlandica*, *foetida*), the dolphin (*delphinus leucas*), the morse (*trichecus rosmarus*), the ork (*phocaena orca*), and finally whales, which while rarely approaching the Siberian shore waters are very frequent to the north of the oceanic islands, Wrangel Land and New Siberia. They however fall as booty not to the Siberians but to the American whalers, and indeed it may be said that the resources of the Arctic Ocean are little worked from the Siberian side.



## CHAPTER V.

**The Amour-Littoral Border Land.**

Division into four regions; Transbaikal region; its contour, climatic conditions, flora, fauna and population; the Amour region, its orography, climate, vegetative covering, fauna and population; the Ussuri-Littoral region, its orography, hydrography, climate, fauna and flora; the island of Sakhalin; the population of the country; the Okhotsk-Kamchatka region, and its component parts; the Okhotsk shore, Kamchatka and the Chukot country; their orography, flora and fauna; scantiness of the population, and its disposition; the Okhotsk and Behring seas.

**A** FAR greater importance than is possessed by the above described regions belongs to the Amour-Littoral border land of Siberia, consisting from an administrative point of view of three territories, the Transbaikal, Amour and Littoral, forming together the Littoral Governor-Generalship. Geographically, the Amour-Littoral region occupies the whole Russian part of the Amour basin, the Transbaikal part of the Yenissei watershed, the whole Russian coast zone of the Japan Sea, the island of Sakhalin, the whole shore of the Okhotsk Sea up to the Stanovoi or Yablonovoi range, the whole peninsula of Kamchatka and the whole north-eastern extremity of the Asiatic continent, beyond the Yablonovoi range, with the river region of the Anadyr and the Chukotsk peninsula. The Amour-Littoral country thus extends over an area exceeding fifty-two thousand square geographical miles. This expanse is divided on account of its natural conditions into four sharply contrasted regions, the Transbaikal, Amour, Ussuri-Littoral and Okhotsk-Kamchatka.

The first of these, the Transbaikal country, coincides with the Transbaikal territory, and covers eleven thousand square geographical miles. It is intersected diagonally through the very centre by the Stanovoi range, which is the watershed between the waters flowing from its north-western side into Baikal Lake, namely the Selenga, Barguzin and Upper Angara, and into the Vitim, the right tributary of the Lena, and for the streams flowing from the south-east into the Shilka, one of the two upper rivers of the system of the Amour. In an offset of this range which nowhere attains the limit of eternal snow but serves to divide the longitudinal valleys of the Ingoda and Onon, component branches of the river Shilka, rises the highest mountain of the whole region, Chokondo 8,200 feet above sea level. Its summit is in the Alpine zone but nevertheless does not reach the snow line. The whole Transbaikal country with the exception of the steppe tract passing along the Chinese frontier between

the Onon and the Argun, the southern constituent of the Amour, is more or less mountainous. The prevailing trend of the mountain ridges of the Transbaikal country is from the south-west to the north-east. This direction is not only followed by the Yablonovoi range itself, but also by the ridge which is detached from the Khamar-Daban in the south-western corner of the territory and bounds the longitudinal valley occupied by Lake Baikal on the south-east, as also by the ridge above mentioned separating the longitudinal valleys of the Onon and Ingoda, and by the Nerchinsk range which serves as the watershed between the Shilka and the Argun as far as their confluence, and finally by the ridge accompanying the Shilka on its left bank. None of these mountains attain any great absolute altitude; the height of the passes of the Yablonovoi range between Verkhneudinsk and Chita does not exceed 3,400 feet, and the loftiest points, 4,000 feet. The Khamar-Daban offset contains mountains which reach 6,000 and even 6,700 feet. There is no lack of outcrops of rocky strata in this region; the majority of the mountain ridges exhibit crystalline rocks, granite, gneiss and mica schists. Here and there diorite is met with, as also true volcanic rocks such as trachyte and basalt. The stratified rocks, in their upheaved crystalline layers, disclose the presence of paleozoic formations, especially the silurian and carboniferous, and also secondary such as jurassic, and tertiary. Such a variety in the geological constitution of the Transbaikal country ensures mineral wealth of the first order. Here there are to be found not only gold bearing sands, argentiferous lead and copper ores, but also deposits of tin and mercury. There is no want of iron ores.

The Transbaikal is extremely rich in mineral springs. The country is well watered in spite of its continental situation. The Selenga and its tributaries, the Chikoi, Khilok, and Uda, as also the head streams of the Amour, the Ingoda, Onon, Shilka, and Argun, water beautiful valleys and plains, excellently adapted to cultivation and settled life. Not less well irrigated, but less fertile on account of the greater severity of the climate, are the valleys of Barguzinsk the most northern district in the Transbaikal territory, namely those of the Vitim, its tributary the Tsyba, of the Barguzin and the Upper Angara. In the Transbaikal country there are also plains although of not any great extent, as for example the tableland along the Uda known under the name of the Khorinsk and Bratsk steppes, and in the southern part of the territory near to the Chinese frontier, the Tareisk, Kydara and Argun steppes. At a rough estimate, more than a third of the area of the Transbaikal, or 4,000 square geographical miles may be referred to lands suitable for cultivation and permanent settlement.

The climatic conditions of the Transbaikal country differ widely from those of the other constituent parts of the region under consideration. The climate of Transbaikalia is purely continental. The mean annual temperature ( $-2\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$  Celsius), approaches the average temperature not of the cultivated or agricultural, but of the forest zone of Eastern Siberia. From its winter temperature ( $-25^{\circ}$ ) and that of the coldest month ( $-28^{\circ}$ ) the climate has a severer character than even in the said forest zone, but from the temperature in summer ( $17^{\circ}$ ) and during the hottest month ( $19^{\circ}$ ) Transbaikalia shews better conditions than the agricultural zone of Eastern Siberia. Thus, the difference between the winter and summer temperatures ( $42^{\circ}$ ) and between the hottest and coldest months ( $47^{\circ}$ ) indicates the highly continental character of the climate compared with that of Eastern Siberia. As for the mean temperature of the vegetative period, although it is  $\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  below that of the cultivated zone of East-



ern Siberia, amounting to only 13<sup>o</sup>.5, yet the cereals, notwithstanding the constantly frozen soil in some places of this country at a depth of 1½ arshine, ripen well, thanks to the more powerful action of the sun's rays, depending not only on the southerly situation of the Transbaikal but also on the cloudless and transparent atmosphere, as compared with the cultivated regions of Eastern and Western Siberia.

In reference to the amount of rainfall, the climate of Transbaikalia is also incomparably more continental than that of the agricultural zone of Eastern and Western Siberia. The quantity of moisture precipitated here in the course of the whole year does not exceed 290 millimetres, instead of the 360 and 380 of the agricultural zones of Eastern and Western Siberia, while the winters are almost entirely snowless, with 13 millimetres during the whole season. Fortunately, the summer rainfall, as much as 200 millimetres, is considerably higher not only than that in Eastern but than that in Western Siberia, and the conjunction of these conditions explains the fact that the Transbaikal country may even to-day be considered the chief granary of the whole Amour-Littoral region.

The vegetable covering of Transbaikalia reflects all the minutest features of its climatic peculiarities: in that half of the country which is situated between the north-west slope of the Yablonovoi range and the Baikal Lake, the flora still bears completely the character of the mountain flora of the extremity of the Altai-Sayan system. Among shrubs this flora includes rhododendra (*rododendron chrysanthum* Pall. et *dahuricum* Pall.), the Siberian berberry (*berberis sibirica* Pall.), species of meadow-sweet (*spiraea trilobata* L., *alpina* Pall., *digitata* W.), clothing the mountain steeps with their snow-white flowers, a species of tamarisk (*myricaria davurica* Ehr.), species of currant (*ribes fragrans* Pall., et *procumbens* Pall.). Alpine herbs, exclusively peculiar to the Altai-Sayan system grow in profusion in the Transbaikal; but on crossing to the other side of the Yablonovoi range the flora becomes greatly changed, and plants appear belonging to the far east of the temperate zone of the Asiatic continent. Thus, of the woody races, trees are here to be met with belonging to those generally thriving in Siberia from the very Ural, the oak (*quercus mongolica* Fisch.), the elm (*ulmus campestris* L. var. *pumila* L.), the hazel (*corylus heterophylla* Fisch.) and the wild apple (*pyrus baccata* L.).

It is remarkable that but few of the shrubs first appearing beyond Lake Baikal, as for example the daur blackthorn (*rhamnus davurica* Pall.), of the leguminosae *lespedeza juncea* Pers., one species of meadow-sweet (*spiraea angustifolia* Turcz.), one species of currant (*ribes diacantha* Pall.), the daur snow-ball tree (*viburnum davuricum* Pall.), a small shrub belonging to the spurge family (*geblera suffruticosa* Fisch.), and one of the low growing birches (*betula fruticosa* Pall.) belong to the Amour flora. The rest are peculiar to the so-called daur flora and common to the Transbaikal and the neighbouring Mongolia. There are two kinds of traveller's joy (*clematis davurica* Pall. et *atragene macropetala* Led.), one blackthorn (*rhamnus erythro-xylon* Pall.), among the leguminosae (*lespedeza trichocarpa* Pers. et *hedysarum fruticosum* L.), among the rosaceae, the local wild almond (*amygdalus pedunculata* Pall.), the wild apricot, widely spread on the mountain sides (*prunus sibirica* L.), a species of dog-rose (*rosa alpina* L.), a gattentree (*cotoneaster acutifolia* Lindl.), the shrubby *potentilla glabra* L., a species of tamarisk (*myricaria longifolia* Ehr.),

two species of currant (*ribes triste* Pall. and *pulchellum* Turcz.), honey-suckle (*lonicera chrysantha* Turcz.), two species of shrubby birch (*betula divaricata* Led. and *Gmelini* Bge.) and the willows (*salix berberifolia* Pers. et *divaricata* Pall.), the remaining willows found here belonging to the European kinds.

To the kinds disseminated over the whole of Siberia belong not only all the coniferous trees of Transbaikalia, namely, the pine (*pinus sylvestris* L.), the Siberian and daur larches (*larix sibirica* Led. and *daurica* Fisch.), the Siberian fir (*abies sibirica* Led.), the Siberian pitch pine (*picea orientalis* L.) and the cedar (*pinus cembra* L.), but also many of the deciduous trees, the white and daur birches (*betula alba* L. and *daurica*), the aspen (*populus tremula* L.), et cetera. The fine-scented poplar (*populus suaveolens* Fisch.) is met with on both sides of Lake Baikal.

As for the herbaceous flora, of 112 species of them, first met with beyond Baikal, only 46 pass over to the Amour, the rest belonging to the local so-called daur flora, which serves as the connecting link between Siberia and Mongolia, whither indeed many plants cross over. Among the latter are, for example, of the crow's foot family (*ranunculaceae*) two species of hellebore (*eranthis sibirica* Dc. and *uncinata* Turcz.) and *actinospora daurica* Turcz.; 5 cruciferae *draba mongolica* Turcz., *tetrapoma barbareaefolium* Turcz., *dontostamon eglandulosus* Led. and *oblongifolius* Led.; of the leguminosae 10 species of *oxytropis* (a genus characteristic of the mountain steppes of Central Asia, entirely unknown on the Amour), two astragals; of the rose family (*chamaerhodos grandiflora* Led. and *trifida* Led.); of the stonecrops, (*saxifraga multiflora* Led.); 6 umbelliferae, 6 compositae; of the corolliflorae, *pinguicula spatulata* Led.; three species of bindweeds (*ipomea sibirica* Pers., *calystegia pellita* Led. and *calystegia subvolubilis* Led.); 4 borragineae, 3 scrophulariae, 3 labiateae and 3 species of *statice* characteristic of the salt steppe; of the family of *monochlamydae*, two species of rhubarb (*rheum undulatum* L. et *campestre* L.), one of sorrel (*rumex Gmelini* Turcz.), *passerina Stelleri* Wickstr. and a spurge (*euphorbia Pallasii* Turcz.); of the monocotyledons, *sparganium longifolium* Turcz.; two orchids (*orchis salina* Turcz. *gymnadenia pauciflora* Lindl.), *iris ventricosa* Pall., *pardanthus dichotomus* Led., *polygonatum sibiricum* Led., two sedges and two grasses.

Corresponding to the striking change in the vegetable covering of the Transbaikal country is that of the fauna of the invertebrates. Very many of their forms, entirely absent from Siberia, as for example among the articulate animals the river crayfish, appear upon the upper streams of the Amour system, of course with specific distinctions from the European (*astacus amourensis*). The approach to the sea makes itself felt in the appearance of such forms of insects also as serve as transitional forms from the continental to the littoral. Thus, for example, in the genus *carabus* of the family of the coleoptera, not possessing true wings under their brilliant elytra, the local elongated, comparatively narrow forms of the subgenus *coptolabus* (species *coptolabus smaragdinus* Fisch), serve as the transition to the still more elongated forms of the Japanese subgenus of carabs *damaster*.

As regards the vertebrate fauna, with the more extensive regions of distribution of these animals, the Transbaikal fauna naturally shews incomparably more resemblance to the remaining fauna of Siberia. Nevertheless, to the animals occurring over the whole forest zone

of Eastern Siberia (v. supra), are added a few mountain forms of the Altai-Sayan system, steppe forms of Mongolia, and finally, animals breeding in the Amour Territory and in Manchuria. To the first belong, the musk deer (*moschus moschiferus* L.), roebuck (*cervus capreolus* L.), badger (*meles taxus* Schr.), polecat (*mustela putorius* L.), Eversmann's marmot (*spermophilus Eversmanni* Br.) and the rat hare (*lagomys alpinus* Pall.). To the second belong, the korsak (*canis corsac* L.), steppe cat (*felis manul* Pall.), baibak (*arctomys bobac* Schr.), *lagomys ogotona* Pall., the jerboa (*dipus jaculus* Pall.), tolai (*lepus tolai* Pall.), two species of saiga (*antilope gutturosa* Pall., *antilope crista* Temm.) and finally, the kulan or dzhigetai (*equus hemionus* Pall.). To the third belongs the Amour raccoon (*canis procyonoides* Gr.), a species of *dur* (*cervus elaphus* L.) and wild boar (*sus scropha* L.).

The fauna of the birds which from the very nature of their mode of locomotion are capable of having the most extensive region of distribution, also here includes both northern and southern forms. To the first, for example, belong the capercaillie (*tetrao urogallus* L.), blackcock (*tetrao tetrix* L.), hazel-hen (*tetrao bonasia* L.), white and alpine ptarmigan (*lagopus albus* Gm. and *alpinus* Nilss.); to the second, the steppe blackcock (*syrrhaptes paradoxus* Pall.), black crane (*grus monachus* Tem.), and two more southern species of crane (*grus leucogrammus* Pall. and *grus virgo* L.), the blue magpie (*pica cyanea* Pall.), et cetera.

In regard to snakes and other reptiles, on the whole occurring so rarely in northern Siberia, the Transbaikal country is comparatively rich. Besides the harmless snake (*coluber rufodorsatus* Cant.) and *elaphis dione* Pall., there are here to be met with the extremely venomous varieties, *trigonocephalus intermedius* Strauch and *trigonocephalus Blomhoffii* Boje. Finally the piscino fauna on crossing the Yablonovoi range into the system of the Amour completely alters its character (v. infra).

Thanks to comparatively favourable climatic conditions and the early colonization, which began here already from the end of the XVII century (in 1692 there were already 7,000 Russians, in 1720, 10,000, in 1740, 20,000 and in 1760, 40,000) the Transbaikal territory has now as many as 570,000 inhabitants, that is, above five souls to the square geographical mile, of whom the natives, mainly Buriats and to a small extent Tungus, count 170,000 or about 30 per cent of the total population. These Buriats of Mongol race and Buddhist faith, nomads within narrow limits, have here preserved, in the immediate neighbourhood and communication with Mongolia, their national characters in a greater degree than in the government of Irkutsk. They are here occupied chiefly in cattle rearing, while agriculture occupies the first place among the Russian population. The proportion of the town population in the Transbaikal country is insignificant; it does not exceed five per cent; indeed there are no collections at all considerable of town population except in Chita whose inhabitants have now attained 13,000 souls.

The preponderance of the rural over town industries is sufficiently indicated by the relation of the numbers of the population to the domestic animals reared. There are here 70 horses per 100 inhabitants, with an absolute number of 400,000 head, that is, as many in proportion as in Eastern Siberia. As for the relative number of horned and other cattle, the Transbaikal is in this respect in the most favourable conditions compared with early colonized Siberia. There are here over 100 head of horned cattle per 100 inhabitants, the absolute number being

570,000, that is, 5 head per married couple, while of other cattle there are 350 head per 100 inhabitants, the absolute number being as many as 2,000,000, which directly demonstrates the high proportion among the population of the cattle breeding class, and the wealth of pastures possessed by the country.

### The Amour Country.

This country, the second part of the Amour-Littoral region, presents in all its physical conditions a type absolutely different from that of Transbaikalia. By the Amour country is understood all the vast area occupied by the basin of the Amour along its left bank from the confluence of the Shilka with the Argun to the Stanovoi range and the Dzhugdyr ridge, dividing the Amour basin from that of the river Uda. Thus into the country of the Amour enters the whole Amour territory and the expanse between the eastern frontier running along the meridian and the course of the Amour to its mouth. In this way the Amour country occupies, just as Transbaikalia, not less than 11,000 square geographical miles.

Mention has been already made above of the Stanovoi or Yablonovoi range, serving for a long distance as the northern boundary of the country, as this range separates the Yakutsk and Amour-Littoral regions of Siberia. But independent of this range, descending less abruptly into the Amour territory than into that of Yakutsk, a considerable part of the country is mountainous and filled with the spurs of the Stanovoi range and by such offsets as, like the Little Khingan or Burein range, have an almost meridional direction and fling back the Amour by their prolongations, forcing it to take a wide curve to the south. The connecting link between the Little Khingan and the Stanovoi range is the Dzhugdyr ridge, forming the watershed between the basins of the Amour and the Uda, falling into the sea of Okhotsk in the Littoral Territory. The Little Khingan, with an average altitude of 2,500 feet reaches as much as 4,000 and even 6,000 feet at its summits near the head waters of the Bureya. The crest of the Khingan and especially its peaks are formed of «golets» sprinkled on their slopes with stone heaps. The rocks prevailing in the mountain ridge are crystalline and consist mainly of granites which are also discovered on the Amour, where the mountains approaching the bed of the river nowhere rise higher than 1,000 feet above the level of the river. Upon the mountain slopes of the Stanovoi range and the Little Khingan and their offshoots are developed stratified rocks of paleozoic formations, especially the devonian, upon the southern incline of the Stanovoi range; secondary, namely, jurassic, upon the lower reaches of the Oldoi and Zeya and upon the upper waters of the Bureya, and finally tertiary along the Amour, Zeya and Bureya.

The country is abundantly watered. Its chief stream the Amour is one of the three colossal rivers of Asia falling into the Pacific. Its length, counting the rivers Argun and Kerulen as its head waters, amounts to not less than 4,600 versts. Having described its great arc, whose southern part crossed 48° N. lat., and having embraced with this arc on the south the whole Russian region of the Amour, it turns to the north-east and after reaching 51°50' N. lat., approaches so closely to the part of the Tartar strait, forming the northern extremity

of the Sea of Japan, that Lake Kizi, a lateral enlargement of the bed of the Amour on the right side is only separated by a twelve-verst isthmus from the Tartar strait, a little to the north of the beautiful bay of De Kastri. Here meeting with an impossible barrier to its exit towards the sea, the Amour swerves to the north, and only about 53° N. lat. finally turns to the sea and falls into that part of the Tartar strait which forms a part of the cold and inhospitable Sea of Okhotsk. The left tributaries of the Amour, the Zeya and Selimdzheya, the Bureya and the Argun are after the Amour the chief arteries of the Amour country. It is only in the lower reaches of these streams that more or less extensive plains spread out on either side; nearest the Stanovoi range and the Little Khingan the region is mountainous.

The climate of the Amour country, although still continental, is yet characterized by a greater humidity than in original Siberia. In Blagoveschensk the mean annual temperature is  $-1.3^{\circ}$  Celsius, but the mean winter temperature is  $-24^{\circ}$ , that of the coldest month  $-27^{\circ}$ , that of summer  $19^{\circ}$  and that of the hottest month  $21^{\circ}$ . This yields a difference between summer and winter temperatures of  $43^{\circ}$ , and between the hottest and coldest months of  $48^{\circ}$ , almost the same as in Transbaikalia. But the mean temperature of the five-months vegetative period,  $15^{\circ}6$ , is still more favourable than in the Transbaikal country, and perfectly admits of the free development of agriculture, while upon the lower reaches of the Amour, in Nikolaevsk, where the average temperature of the year is  $-2.6^{\circ}$ , the temperature of the winter  $-22^{\circ}$ , that of summer  $15^{\circ}$  and the climate is less continental, with differences of  $37^{\circ}$  and  $40^{\circ}$ , the free development of agriculture is very difficult, as the mean temperature of the five-months vegetative period only amounts to  $11.6^{\circ}$ .

In the quantity of the annual rain, over 500 millimetres, of which 290 fall during the three summer months, the Amour country has not only a more humid climate than Transbaikalia with 290, and the agricultural zones of Eastern and Western Siberia, 360 and 380 respectively, but even more than their forest zones which have 400 and 470 millimetres. The excess of moisture in the Amour country exercises an unfavourable influence upon agriculture, which is still further intensified by the character of the vegetable covering of the region. All the lower slopes of the mountain ridges and their offsets are overgrown with weeds, and the upper declivities with trees which so powerfully arrest the moisture that the soil does not dry up. In consequence of this the greater part of the area is covered with unbroken swamps and forests, above which rise only the denuded «golets» of the rocky crests covered with stony talus upon their slopes. Cereals sown upon clearings run to straw reaching an incredible height, but frequently yield a poor grain sometimes not ripening completely. An exception to this is shewn by a few spots situated partly along the Amour in places not drowned by its inundations, partly near the lower course of the Zeya. There are at present few such spots suitable for agriculture, and of its area of 11,000 square geographical miles not more than 2,000 can as yet be recognized as fit for agricultural settlement.

Fortunately, experience has shewn that the struggle with the excess of moisture which is an impediment to the cultivation and colonization of the Amour, which is to-day in the position of Germany in the days of Tacitus, is possible. The settlers in the Amour territory blaze over large areas the growths of reeds, the damp soil gradually dries and becomes converted into fertile arable land. In the course of 38 years, which had expired between the geograph-

ical and botanical explorations of the academicians Maximov (1854) and Korzhinsky (1892), the climatic conditions of the country have already manifestly changed for the better and the gradual progress of the country, exceeding Germany in extent, in the sense of its gradual passage from the condition of the Germany of Tacitus to its present state, has already begun. But of course much time will still pass, before Russian colonization, now capable of occupying not more than one-fifth of the country, wrests step by step from a stern nature even half of the area for cultivation and civilization, and so far, without the spots which are accessible to cultivation and colonization, the Amour country, in the mountainous region of which there is still much gold to be found, is condemned only to sporadic and partly rapacious cultivation.

The vegetative covering of the Amour country is luxuriant and peculiar, and displays a great difference from the floras of the other parts of Siberia. Even the woody vegetation exhibits striking differences from the similar vegetation of not only Siberia but also Transbaikalia. With the ordinary Siberian races of conifers are here associated the Manchurian cedar (*pinus mandshurica* Rupr.), the ayan pitch-pine (*picea ajanensis* Fisch.) and an ally of the conifers, the yew (*taxus baccata* L.) peculiar to the mountains of the Caucasus. The yew nowhere else is to be met with in Siberia, and shews by its appearance on the lower Amour the nearness of the sea. The flora of the foliage trees and shrubs is both richer and more varied, here going to meet the beneficent marine influences of the Eastern Ocean. The lime genus is here represented by two peculiarly eastern forms, *tilia cordata* Mill. and *tilia mandshurica* Rupr. et Max. The maple, a stranger to the whole of Siberia, has here four representatives, of which the *acer mono* Max. is the characteristic local kind, the *acer ginnala* Max., a species closely allied to the eastern European *acer tataricum* L. and the Semirechensk *acer Semenowii* Reg.; the *acer tegmentosum* Maxim. bears a resemblance to the American kind (*acer pensylvanicum* L.); finally, the *acer spicatum* Lam. is undoubtedly an American variety. The apple, already appearing in Transbaikalia in the shape of a very small fruited variety (*pyrus baccata*), is here represented by a beautiful new species (*pyrus ussuriensis* Max.), and the bird cherry by two local varieties, (*prunus Maackii* Rupr. et Maximowiczii Rupr.). Two local species of walnut embellish the forests of the Amour, *juglans mandshurica* Max. and *juglans stenocarpa* Max., as also the local species of the ash unknown to the whole of Siberia, *fraxinus mandshurica* Rupr. With the European and Transbaikal varieties of the elm is associated the local *ulmus montana* Winckl. Further alongside the species of hazel already appearing in Transbaikalia, *corylus heterophylla* Fisch., is found a new species, *corylus mandshurica* Max. Finally, among the birches reappear a Kamchatka variety (*betula Ermanni* Cham.) and one local timber tree (*betula costata* Trautv.). The third local variety of birch, (*betula Middendorffii* Trautv.) is a shrub. The charming little tree of the Amour country with a palmy crown, (*dimorphanthus mandshuricus* Rupr.) is far removed from the character of the Siberian trees. It belongs to the family of *araliaceæ* which loves a moist climate and is nowhere to be met with in Siberia. Not less remarkable is the cork tree of this country (*phellodendron amurense* Rupr.), belonging to the family of *zanthoxyleæ* nowhere to be met with in the whole of Russia.

The shrubs of the Amour country are still more peculiar than the trees. Not less than 24 varieties of shrubs here met with are entirely new for any one arriving from Siberia.

and Transbaikalia. Of these, three climbers are the lianas of the woods here. They are first of all, a beautiful plant belonging to the rare family of schizandraceae with pale rose-scented flowers and red berries, (*maximoviczia chinensis* Rupr.), spread from northern China through Manchuria to the Amour country; a species of vine, very slightly distinguished from the true vine (*vitis amurensis* Rupr.); and finally the wild vine (*cissus brevipedunculata* Max.). The species of clematis appearing here for the first time, *clematis mandshurica* Rupr. and *aethusaefolia* Turcz., belong to the non-climbing shrubby varieties of this genus. Of the two species of local berberry one is also peculiar to northern China (*berberis sinensis* Desf.); another, local (*berberis amurensis*). The very curious shrub of the Amour country, *actinidia kolomikta* Rupr., covered with large white scented flowers, has not yet found a strictly definite position in systematic botany, it being now referred to one now to another of the exotic families. Of the four local varieties of spindle-tree there is one Japanese (*evonymus alatus* Th.) and three local (*evonymus pauciflorus* Max., *evonymus Maackii* Rupr. and *evonymus macropterus* Rupr.). Of the leguminosae the small shrub found here *lespedeza stipulacea* Max., also grows in the environs of Pekin. Of the rose family, the local species of cherry (*prunus glandulifolia* Rupr. and meadowsweet (*spiraea amurensis* Max.) are shrubs. Two local species, belonging to the same genus as our so-called garden jasmine (*philadelphus*) are a conspicuous adornment of the forests, *philadelphus tenuifolius* Rupr. and *philadelphus Schrenkii* Rupr. The beautiful local shrub of the same family *Deutzia parviflora* Bge. is a Chinese plant, spread by cultivation. To the family of araliaceae not to be met with in Siberia belong two shrubs common to this flora and that of northern China (*panax sessiliflorum* Rupr. and *eleutherococcus senticosus* Max.). Of the honeysuckles there are here one chinese species (*lonicera chrysantha* Turcz.) and two local (*lonicera Maackii* Rupr. and *lonicera Maximowiczii* Rupr.). Common to northern China is a species of lilac occurring here on the skirts of the woods with somewhat minute whitish flowers (*syringa amurensis* Rupr.). A variety of laurel, met with on the lower Amour is that called after Kamchatka (*daphne kamtschatica* Max.).

Among the herbs of the Amour country, not less than 110 species are exclusively peculiar to this region, the rest are common to the Amour with China, Japan, Kamchatka and even America, but especially with Transbaikalia and Siberia. The whole flora of the Amour has 340 plants common with that of European Russia, that is, 38 per cent, while with Transbaikalia it has 527, or more than 58 per cent.

Equally peculiar with the flora of the Amour country is its invertebrate fauna and particularly the insects which are dependent on the same climatic conditions as the plants. Not less than 60 per cent of all the species of insects occurring in the Amour country are unknown to Europe, although the general character of the fauna is palearctic, that is, proper to the whole sub-polar and temperate zones of the Old World.

As for the vertebrata, in Amouria associated with the mammals occurring in the forest zone of Siberia are not only those animals which were mentioned in the survey of the fauna of Transbaikalia, but also some others. There belong the maral (*cervus elaphus* L.), whose horns are so highly prized by the Chinese, the tiger (*felis tigris* L.), the irbis (*felis irbis* Pall.), the mountain wolf (*canis alpinus* Pall.) and the tibetan bear (*ursus tibetanus*). The fish of the Amour country are in the highest degree interesting, the river and its trib-

utaries being extraordinarily rich in them. Of the sturgeon family, the local species of bieleuga attains enormous dimensions (*huso orientalis* Pall. and *amurensis* Pall.), weighing sometimes from 30 to 50 pounds. The sturgeon of this region (*sturio Schrenkii* Br.) likewise differs from the Russian type, but the sterlet belongs to the Caspian species (*acipenser ruthenus* L.). Two species of salmon which ascend the Amour and Ussuri, to the present day in countless numbers, have a great significance for the country, the gorbusha (*trutta proteus* Pall.) and ket (*trutta lagocephalus* Pall.). Of the other fish common to Siberia are the delicious taimen (*salmo fluviatilis* Pall.), the char (*salmo coregonoides* Pall.), the smelt (*salmo eperlanus*), the carp (*cyprinus carpis*) and eelpout (*lota vulgaris* Cus.). But there are also a few fish which are extremely characteristic of the Amour basin. Among these are to be reckoned the Amour fish (*pristidion Semenovii* Dyb.), the daur silarus (*silurus asotus* Pall.), the barbodon locustris L., *plagiograthus Yelskii* Dyb., the white fish (*culter abramoides* Dyb.), the verkhogliadka (*cutter Sieboldi* Dyb.), the verkhobriushka (*culter lucidus* Dyb.) and the local variety of pike (*esox Reicherti* Dyb.), the latter attaining an enormous size.

The population of the Amour country consists of only 90,000 inhabitants of both sexes, among whom are 3,000 wandering natives. The majority of these natives (Orochons, Mangountsi, Birars) belong to the Tunguz tribes, and only the minority to the Ghiliaks, who have nothing do with them ethnographically, and speak a language of their own. The latter are more numerous only on the Amour frith and on the seacoast of the Littoral territory, as also on the island of Sakhalin. The Ghiliaks together with the Ainos, Kurils and ancient aborigenes of Kamchatka belong to a special coast tribe which once occupied the whole shore of the Eastern Ocean inclusive of the Japanese islands, at least the northern islands, the Kuril line and the peninsula of Kamchatka. They were driven out from their places of abode on the Japanese series of islands by the Japanese, and on the coast by the Manchurian tribes.

The Ghiliaks are principally fishermen and are engaged in sea industries, while among the Manchurian tribes, as ancient cattle breeders, the polar form of this occupation, the rearing of reindeer, is in a state of more or less equilibrium with trapping and fishing. Much more numerous than these weak and it may be said dying-out tribes of Tunguz in the Amour country is the settled agricultural Tunguz tribe of Manchurians. These Manchurians, now numbering 14,000, occupied in the times preceding the Russian dominion an excellent area for colonization, upon the left bank of the Amour, opposite the Chinese town of Aigun and by the terms of the Aigun and Peking treaties remain established upon Russian territory, but upon their own lands, as Chinese subjects, and are occupied mainly with agriculture. To this settled native population must be added further about 1,000 Coreas now established in the country.

Russian immigrants still form 80 per cent of the population of the country. They have settled in more or less considerable villages along the whole course of the Amour with the exception of those portions adjacent to its banks where constant inundations impede the settled and agricultural mode of life of the Russian colonies, as also upon the extensive and excellent area for purposes of colonization stretching along both sides of the lower reaches of the Zeya and its lower tributaries. Another area adapted to colonization is moving gradually into the heart of the country, along the river Bureya and the neighbouring minor



tributaries of the Amour, and may in time occupy the whole space between the curve of the Amour and the Vanda tahlend, which extends in the direction of the chord of the arc formed by the Amour, between the mouth of the Bureya and the Khaharovka. In the few and scantily populated towns of Amouria, among which Blagoveshchensk alone has 9,000 inhabitants, lives a little more than 11 per cent of its population, which clearly shews the predominance in the country of the rural population and of rural industries. The development of the latter is also demonstrated by the number of domestic animals in the country, although this number is comparatively lower than in the neighbouring Transbaikalia. Thus, in the Amour country there are 55 horses per 100 inhabitants (instead of 70), that is, a little more than in Western Siberia. Horned cattle give 70 head (instead of 100), but still more than in Western Siberia, and almost as many as in Eastern Siberia. Only the number of sheep and goats is as yet insignificant, 30 head per 100 inhabitants, instead of 380 as in the Transbaikal country. This is explained not merely by the recent settlement of the region but by the absence of a cattle breeding population.

### The Ussuri-Littoral Tract.

The third type in the Amour-Littoral region is the Ussuri-Littoral tract, occupying the whole southern portion of the Littoral Territory, lying on the right side of the Amour, between its right tributary, the Ussuri, and the Sea of Japan. Including in the Ussuri country the island of Sakhalin lying opposite it in the Sea of Japan, an expanse of 7,000 square geographical miles is obtained. The greater part of this space is occupied by the right sides of the basins of the Ussuri and of the lower part of the course of the Amour from its confluence with the Ussuri. The long but low and very wooded range of Sikhete-Alin, stretching more or less parallel to the coast line of the Japanese Sea, separates a narrow shore land from the basin of the Ussuri, which has not sufficient room for the formation of any considerable rivers, excepting the southern part of it turned directly to the south, which has both deeply indented bays with fine harbours and a few tributaries of more importance than in the coast zone, as for example the river Suifun. The whole of the extensive hollow turned to the south of the coast line of this part of the littoral of the Ussuri country has received the name of the Bay of Peter the Great. Upon the peninsula, separating the Amour and Ussuri bays penetrating deep into the Continent, somewhat to the south of 43° north latitude is situated the town and port of Vladivostok, from which a railway is now being carried through the Ussuri country to Khaharovka, situated at the junction of the Ussuri and the Amour upon the right bank of the latter, the residence of the Governor-General of the three territories constituting the whole of the Amour-Littoral region of Siberia.

The height of the Sikhete-Alin is inconsiderable; in the case of the passes it amounts to from 1,270 to 2,370 feet, and in that of the highest of the mountain peaks yet measured, Mount Camel (Khuntami), it reaches 3,600 feet. In the crest of the Sikhete-Alin crystalline rocks such as granite are laid bare, and in its northern part which throws the lower course of the Amour back from De Castri Bay to the north, volcanic rocks such as trachyte and

basalt are to be met with. At the contact of the crystalline with the stratified rocks in the Sikhete-Alin, argentiferous lead deposits occur, and twenty versts from St. Olga Bay, rich deposits of iron ores. The eastern slope of the Sikhete-Alin, in its offspurs, sometimes descends in sheer precipices into the sea, and at others, leaves a certain space for the streams running along short parallel valleys to fall into the sea. In the neighbourhood of their mouths there are at times very convenient bays and bights, as for example, the bays of St. Olga and St. Vladimir in the southern part of the country and of De Kastri in the northern part. Upon the wide space dividing the Sikhete-Alin from the course of the Ussuri, run the important right tributaries of this river; in the south-western corner of this country the Russian possessions cross over to the left side of the Ussuri and embrace the extensive lake Khanka. The whole of this expanse includes the areas of colonization belonging to the country, which are only embarrassed by the abundance of swamps and forests and the extraordinary humidity of the climate.

The seashore range of the Sikhete-Alin, in spite of its slight elevation, serves however as an extremely important climatic line of division. The coast zone, situated upon the eastern acclivity of the Sikhete-Alin, wrapped for the greater part of the year in impenetrable fogs, differs extremely from the wide Ussuri zone, incomparably more continental in its climate, whose more favourable climatic conditions are also extended to the seacoast strip of the southward trending Bay of Peter the Great. This difference comes out most clearly on comparing the climates of points placed at no great distances from each other, Vladivostok, situated in the depths of the Bay of Peter the Great, and the Bay of St. Olga, situated 200 versts behind the cape which forms the turning point, separating the southern littoral of the country from the south-eastern, upon the foggy and damp south-eastern shore. The mean temperature for the year in both points, differing in latitude by only  $1/2^\circ$ , is the same, namely  $4.5^\circ$ , but in the Bay of St. Olga the mean winter temperature is  $-10^\circ$  Celsius, that of the coldest month  $-13^\circ$ , the summer temperature  $18^\circ$ , that of the hottest month  $20^\circ$ ; accordingly, the difference between summer and winter is  $28^\circ$ , that between the hottest and coldest months  $33^\circ$ ; while the mean winter temperature in Vladivostok is  $-12^\circ$ , that of the coldest month  $-16^\circ$ , the summer temperature  $18^\circ$ , that of the hottest month  $21^\circ$ ; accordingly, the difference between summer and winter is  $30^\circ$ , between the hottest and coldest months  $37^\circ$ , so that the climate of Vladivostok is more continental than marine. In Khabarovka the mean annual temperature is of course lower than in Vladivostok and in the Bay of St. Olga, it is equal to  $0^\circ$ , but the remaining elements of the climate are favourable, notwithstanding the severity of the winters. With an average winter temperature of  $-22^\circ$  and coldest month of  $-25^\circ$ , the summer shews  $19^\circ$ , the hottest month  $20^\circ$ ; the difference between summer and winter is  $41^\circ$ , and that between the hottest and coldest months  $45^\circ$ . As might be expected, the mean temperature of the five-months vegetative period throughout the Ussuri country, in the Bay of St. Olga  $15^\circ$ , in Vladivostok  $16^\circ$ , and in Khabarovka  $17^\circ$ , is distinctly favourable to agriculture, but the climatic discrepancy between the two points shews itself most strongly in the quantity of moisture precipitated in the course of the year. In Vladivostok the annual rain fall is 336 millimetres, of which 158 belong to the three summer months, while in the Bay of St. Olga it is 1,024 millimetres, of which 452 millimetres fall to the summer months. Thus,

compared with the Bay of St. Olga, which represents the type of the most humid marine climate, the climate of Vladivostok appears to be far more continental, indeed even more so than that of Khabarovka, where 560 millimetres of moisture is precipitated in the course of the year, of which 312 falls during the summer months. Under such comparatively excellent climatic conditions, the port of Vladivostok remains open and accessible at almost all seasons of the year, with the exception only of an extremely short winter period, lasting here as in Odessa not more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 months.

Further, upon the western slope of the Sikhete-Alin, in the broad zone, covered to a considerable extent with woods and morasses, between the coast range and the river Ussuri, the climate is far moister than in Vladivostok and in particular is more rainy in summer. The humidity of the climate and the dampness of the soil, which never dries up owing to the dense vegetation, have determined the method of sowing grain in rows or beds, to allow the free passage of streams of air to prevent the rotting of the crop at the root. But however this may be, it has become evident that certain localities of the country are so damp that in them such a development of sporiferous plants or microfungi takes place on the ears that bread baked from the flour of grain stricken with these blights becomes intoxicating, producing in fact such symptoms in those who eat it. This inconvenience called forth by climatic conditions sometimes even causes immigrants to abandon the «spots which produce intoxicating bread».

Absolutely different and far less favourable are the conditions (as far as agriculture is concerned, as a consequence of its geographical situation), of the island of Sakhalin, which has acquired latterly a world-wide notoriety as a Russian convict settlement. This island, severed from the Ussuri country by the most northern part of the Sea of Japan, the Tartar or Nevelsky's straits, stretches exactly along the 8 degrees of latitude, between  $54^{\circ}$  and  $46^{\circ}$ , and projects with its northern extremity, Cape St. Elisabeth, into the Sea of Okhotsk, and with its southern extremity, bending round the extensive bay of Aniva in the shape of a horseshoe, approaches Japan, from which it is separated by the straits of Laperouse. Somewhat to the north of the bay of De Castri, the straits dividing Sakhalin from the Ussuri country are so narrow and shallow that they are inaccessible to large ocean-going ships, and in consequence rather separate than unite the mouth of the Amour with the Sea of Japan. The skeleton of Sakhalin is formed of a fairly elevated range with steep summits, consisting of volcanic rocks, such as basalt, which have lifted beds of stratified rocks belonging to the rare, in Siberia, cretaceous formation. It is here rich in shells, ammonites of great size, inoceramus, patella, rhynchonella et cetera. There also occur layers of middle tertiary or miocene formation, in which many remains of vegetation are to be met with, consisting of the leaves of the beech (*fagus*), walnut (*juglans*), and salisburia, now no longer thriving in Sakhalin. To the north of parallel  $52^{\circ}$  the Sakhalin range, attaining in its loftiest points (Three Brothers, on the northern extremity of the island and Engys-Pal, somewhat north of  $52^{\circ}$  N. lat.) 2,000 feet upon sea level, falls abruptly on the eastern side to the Sea of Okhotsk, and on the west, on the side of the Tartar straits, forms a low and marshy coast land between its foothills and the shore line. To the south of  $52^{\circ}$  the range is cleft into two crests by a longitudinal valley, along which from their junction run in the line of the meridian in opposite directions the

two principal streams of the island, the Tym and the Poronai. The extremity of the eastern ridge, attaining in Mount Tiara a height of 3,000 feet, declining a little from the meridian line to the south-east, beyond the mouth of the Poronai, forms the broad Bay of Patience. The western crest as far as the very extremity of the island falls abruptly into the Sea of Japan, rising above it to 3,000 and even 4,000 feet, and does not present on this side any convenient harbours, but exhibits near Due splendid deposits of coal. These coal fields, as also the petroleum springs discovered recently in Sakhalin, together with the fine fisheries of the Bay of Aniva, the bottom of which is luxuriantly covered with weeds going by the name of sea-cabbage, promise an economical future to this otherwise inhospitable island.

In what unfavourable climatic conditions, notwithstanding a comparatively not very northerly situation, the island of Sakhalin is placed, thanks to the current flowing down from the bleak Okhotsk Sea along the eastern littoral, bringing with it huge masses of ice, is evident from the following data. The mean temperature in the principal settlement of the island, Due, about 51° north latitude upon the western and warmer coast, is 0.5°, the winter temperature — 15°, that of the coldest month — 16°, of summer + 14°, of the hottest month 16.5°. Moreover the mean temperature of the five-months vegetative period, less than 12°, is insufficient for the development here of permanent agriculture. Little better is the climate in the Muraviov post lying 4° further south in the extreme south-eastern corner of the island. Here, it is true, the mean annual temperature is higher, 2.3°, the winter more moderate; the mean temperature is — 11°, coldest month — 12°; but on the other hand the summer is colder, the mean summer temperature being — 13°, that of the hottest month + 16°, so that the average temperature of the five-months vegetative period, less than 12°, is equally unfavourable to the raising of grain. This is explained by the circumstance that the eastern coast of Sakhalin, along which polar glacial currents descend to the south is in summer considerably colder than the western. As for the rainfall, it is much less considerable on the western littoral of Sakhalin than on the Bay of St. Olga, and amounts during the year to a little more than 500 millimetres, of which only 184 fall to the three summer months, while the autumns are almost as rainy as the summer. In a word, Sakhalin is unfit for agricultural colonization. Equally unfit is the whole northern half of the Sikhete-Alin and the corresponding part of the littoral, so that there can hardly be found more than 3,000 square geographical miles as an area for colonization in the whole Ussuri-Littoral country, after deduction is made of the too swampy and too damp spots, which so severely hamper the development of colonization in the Ussuri zone.

In the vegetable growth of the Ussuri country little difference is observable from that of the Amour. The greater part of the characteristic plants of Amouria cross over into Ussuria. It is however noteworthy that the proportion of European Russian forms is higher in the Ussuri country than in the Amour, namely 47 instead of 38 per cent, which is a direct indication of the less continental nature of the climate. The species of trees are identical with those in the Amour country. Only one new tree appears, a hard-beam (*carpinus cordata* Bl.) and two shrubs, the wild vine crossing from North China (*cissus humulifolia* Bge.) and the common European berberry (*berberis vulgaris* L.). Only a little over 80 species of herbaceous plants are found in the Ussuri Country, and not met with in Amouria, among them being species common to North China, Japan and America. Only 17 local plants

are known which have been found nowhere except in Ussuria. Among them is the celebrated ginseng (*panax ginseng* Reg.), whose root is so prized as a remedy by the Chinese. Probably many of these plants will be subsequently found in the Amour Country also, but some of them bear undoubtedly a more southern character. To the latter are to be referred, from the pea family, the beautiful climbing *glycine ussuriensis* Reg., of the exotic family *pondederiaceae*, the very showy marsh plant (*monochoria Korsakavii* Reg.); of the family of *ericaulaceae*, *ericanlon ussuriense*; finally, of the ferns, with a subtropical appearance, *pleopeltis ussuriensis* Reg. The flora of the Ussuri country has many forms common to North America; 25 per cent of the whole Ussuri flora is met with in North America, but of course the majority of these species belong to those equally existent over the whole northern zone alike of the Old and the New World, and only 32 species, entirely foreign to European Russia, cross from America, 14 through the Yakutsk region and 18 direct.

Almost the same may be said in reference to the invertebrate fauna, and especially of the insects, as to the flora. The majority of the species here are met with also in the Amour country, while the proportion of peculiar forms is very high, but approaching the Sea of Japan on the one hand a few forms appear not found in the Amour Country and bearing a subtropical character, and on the other, the proportion increases of purely European species or their analogues, a fact particularly noticeable in those orders of insects possessing a highly developed power of flight, as for example the butterflies and moths (*lepidoptera*). On the whole, both the flora and the fauna of the Ussuri country as also of the whole Amour-Littoral region bears a completely palearctic character, that is, the character of the northern zone of the Old World, here reaching right as far as the Eastern Ocean, while in the more southern zone the palearctic fauna crossing the whole tableland of Central Asia and Tibet together finds its limit in a more western meridian upon the frontier of the warm subtropical plains of China, falling far short of the Eastern Ocean.

The vertebrate animals of the Ussuri-Littoral country are the same as those in Amouria; only one species of deer (*cervus axis*), a few small rodents, and fish in the Sea of Japan appearing in its bays like the herrings and pilchards in countless numbers at certain seasons of the year, constitute the difference between the fauna of the Ussuri-Littoral region and that of the Amour.

The population of the Ussuri-Littoral region together with the island of Sakhalin at present already amounts to 90,000 souls. In this number are only 6,500 wandering aborigenes of the country belonging to the Tunguz tribes of Manguns, Golds, Oroks, and also to the Ghiliaks. There are 13,000 Coreans with fixed abodes, and 8,000 Chinese. The Russian immigrants amount to more than 60,000, or 67 per cent, so that contrary of the Yakutsk region, the Ussuri-Littoral, Amour and Transbaikal districts may be considered completely Russian. In the towns of the Ussuri-Littoral country live about 18 per cent of its population, and only one of these towns, Vladivostok, with 13,000 inhabitants, has the character of a true town population. It is not then astonishing that in the Ussuri-Littoral country the rural predominate over the town industries, a fact appearing in the number of domestic animals reared by the population, although this figure is lower than in Transbaicalia and Amouria on account of the recent settlement of the country. Thus, there are about 45 horses in the

Ussuri-Littoral country to 100 inhabitants, 55 head of horned cattle, and a little more than 30 sheep and goats. But of course these figures are rapidly growing with the extremely noticeable increase of prosperity of the immigrants in the Ussuri country, who latterly have even begun to pay off all at once the loans of money given them on their immigration.

Completely different is the character of the fourth district of the Amour-Littoral region which may be called the Okhotsk-Kamchatka. This north-eastern part of the region under consideration, embracing, beginning with the basin of the river Uda, the watersheds of all the rivers falling into the Okhotsk and Behring seas, occupies an area of more than 27,000 square geographical miles. The Okhotsk-Kamchatka country is geographically composed of the somewhat narrow north-western littoral of the Sea of Okhotsk, the districts of Udsk, Okhotsk and Ghizhiginsk, the peninsula of Kamchatka or district of Petropavlovsk, Chukot land and the islands of the Okhotsk and Behring seas. In the first part the Stanovoi range, with not more than an average height of 3,000 feet, divides the Littoral Territory from that of Yakutsk, sending forth considerable offshoots, more or less filling up the shore zone, which is on the whole mountainous and in some places descends abruptly to the sea, especially between the basins of the Uda and Okhota. The basin of the Uda and the whole of the extensive bay of that name, penetrating between Cape St. Alexander and the port of Ayansk deep into the mainland by its inlets of Udsk, Tugursk, Ulbansk and St. Nicholas, in front of which lie the uninhabited but elevated and fairly extensive Shantar islands, are nevertheless the best part of the Okhotsk-Kamchatka country, while the wide and roomy northern littoral of the Okhotsk Sea, with its Ghizhiginsk and Penzhinsk inlets entering deeply into the mainland to the north-east, represents the most unsuitable spots in the country for the purposes of settlement on account of its climatic conditions. The geological composition of the north-western coastland of the Okhotsk Sea is very various. Along it crystalline rocks, granite, diorite, porphyry, and even labrador, are met with, as also volcanic rocks, such as trachyte and basalt, as for example in the Marekan mountains at Okhotsk, upon the peninsula of Segneka and on the littoral of the Uyanon inlet in the Udsk district. Among stratified rocks, paleozoic formations were found in Cape Karaul in the same locality.

A great scientific interest, but of very little economical future, is afforded by the peninsula of Kamchatka stretching to the south almost as far as 50° north latitude. The skeleton of Kamchatka is formed by the middle Kamchatka range, the southern half of which consists of crystalline schists, and also of granitic, syenite and porphyry, while the northern is composed of tertiary sandstones and volcanic rocks. Upon the boundary between these halves rises the extinct volcano Icha to a height of 16,900. Parallel with the main Middle Kamchatka range, along the eastern shore of the peninsula, stretches a whole row of active and extinct volcanoes, forming as it were the fiery wreaths of Kamchatka. The most southern of the permanently active volcanoes is the small Avacha, whose cone in the year 1848 fell quite in, but in which the extensive crater which was formed after the catastrophe kept constantly smoking from 1852 to 1855. The crown of the system in the neighbourhood of the Avacha bay, upon which is situated the chief town of Kamchatka, is formed by the cones Povorot (7,900 feet), Viliucha (6,750), Strelka or Koriak (a marvellously beautiful cone, scored with longitudinal ribs, 10,630 feet), Avacha (8,700 feet) and Zhupan (8,800 feet); the last two are always active.

Avacha produced frightful eruptions in the years 1825 and 1855. Traces of the first of these eruptions were left in the gullies deeply cut in the sides of the mountain, washed away by the torrents of hot water proceeding from the mass of melted snows. Further to the north, volcanoes are grouped round Lake Kronotskoe. The highest of them, the Kronotsk, is 9,940 feet high. Still further to the north, in view of the Gulf of Kamchatka and the mouths of the river Kamchatka, the principal stream on the peninsula, are collected other volcanoes still active, of which the Kliuchevsk is the highest of all the active volcanoes of Kamchatka, and considerably exceeds in height not only Mont Blanc but even Kazbek, rising from 16,000 and 17,000 feet above sea level. The stream of lava which descended from the Kliuchevsk at the eruption of 1843 almost reached the river Kamchatka. The other active volcanoes of this group also attain colossal altitudes, namely the Krestovsk 11,000 feet, and Sivelich 10,500 feet. Kamchatka reckons in all 12 active and over 26 extinct volcanoes.

The greater part of the Chukot land is occupied by the basin of the Anadyr, but the Chukot or Behring peninsula proper, forming the extreme north-eastern extremity of Asia, separated from America by Behring Straits, is mountainous and deeply indented with fiords. In the neighbourhood of Kamchatka in the Behring Sea are the somewhat elevated and inhabited Commander Islands partly composed of volcanic rocks, enjoying a world-wide reputation on account of their seal fisheries and other marine industries.

The climatic conditions of the whole Okhotsk-Kamchatka country are extremely unfavourable. The Okhotsk Sea, notwithstanding it does not reach as far north as the Baltic, its most northern entrances being on one line of latitude with the Channel, has the character of a thoroughly polar sea, frequently visited by whales. In the most southern ports of the Okhotsk Sea, Udsk and Ayan, the mean annual temperature is about 4°, the winters, notwithstanding the nearness of the Sea, are severe, the mean winter temperature in Ayan being — 20°, and in Udsk with its more continental climate, — 28°. The summer is cool; in Ayan 11°, in Udsk, 13.5°. If agriculture in Udsk with an average temperature during the five-months vegetative period of about 12° is extremely precarious, in Ayan with 8° it is impossible. In Okhotsk the mean annual temperature is even lower, — 5°; the winters are colder than in Ayan, — 19.5°, the summer the same, 11°. The same also is the mean temperature of the five-months vegetative period, 8°, completely excluding the possibility of the development here of agriculture. Somewhat differently situated is Petropavlovsk, in Kamchatka on Behring Sea, which is subject to a purely marine climate. The average annual temperature, 2°, is here higher than in the Okhotsk Sea, the winter much more moderate, — 8°, the summer almost the same as at the Udsk penal settlement, 13°, but the mean temperature of the five-months vegetative period, 10.6°, is less favourable to agriculture than in Udsk. As to the dampness of the climate and the annual rainfall, the Okhotsk-Kamchatka country presents in this respect two sharp contrasts. The larger southern part of the Sea of Okhotsk and the southern extremity of Kamchatka are constantly wrapped in fogs, drenched with rain or smothered with snow, so that in Ayan the quantity of the annual rainfall amounts to 1,113 millimetres, in Petropavlovsk to 1,240 millimetres, in Ayan summer precipitation 526 millimetres, and autumn 452 predominating, while in Petropavlovsk summer has the smallest precipitation, which is however very great in autumn.

winter and spring. On the contrary, on the whole northern littoral of the Sea of Okhotsk, from Okhotsk to Tigihilsk, in the northern part of Kamchatka and in Chukot land, there is a very small rainfall, reaching in Okhotsk in the course of the year only 190 millimetres, and the winters are almost absolutely snowless, with but 9 millimetres. The climate of the Sea of Okhotsk is further characterized by monsoons, that is, winds blowing in summer from the sea and in winter from the land. In winter the aerial current of the monsoons pours across the crest of the Stanovoi range with such force that men and pack animals cannot go against it. In the late autumn ships avail themselves of these winds on the voyage from Okhotsk to Kamchatka. In summer, on the contrary, strong winds blow from the sea into the Okhotsk shore; they bring with them cold, impenetrable fog and «bus», a fine cold misty rain. These monsoons are explained by the strong heating of the land compared with the sea in summer and its cooling in winter.

The flora of the whole of the Okhotsk-Kamchatka country is poor in the number of species and exhibits but small variety, but the vegetable growth over the whole of its damp part upon the western littoral of the Sea of Okhotsk and in southern Kamchatka is luxuriant. The forests of southern Kamchatka consist only of the two coniferous species, the Siberian fir (*abies sibirica* Led.) and of the Siberian cedar (*pinus cembra* L.), and of a few deciduous trees, a birch (*betula pubescens* Ehr.), an alder (*alnus incana* W.), a poplar (*populus suaveolens* Fisch.), a rowan (*pyrus sambucifolia* Ch.), a willow (*salix pentandra* L.), to which must be added further a few shrubs belonging to the genera of clematis (*atragene ochotensis* Pall.), dog-rose (two Siberian species) honeysuckle (*lonicera nigra* L.), birch (*betula Ermanni* Ch.) and willow, several species, not counting the smallest bushes of the family of heathers (*ericaceæ*).

The herbaceous plants, while very poor in the number of species, grow luxuriantly, far exceeding a man's height. Unfortunately among such is a species of nettle with divided leaves (*urtica cannabina* L.), which has latterly increased here to such an extent that it literally, over large areas, completely crowds out all other vegetation and will be fatal to Kamchatka until its fibre finds some practical application.

The western coast of the Sea of Okhotsk presents a great resemblance in its vegetation with Kamchatka. Some plants however cross over into its southern portion from the Ussuri-Littoral region, as for example is the case with the tree, *picea ajanensis*. As for the northern coast of the Sea of Okhotsk, and the perfectly treeless tableland, occupying northern Kamchatka, and Chukot land, their flora bears a greater resemblance to that existing under similar climatic conditions in the polar tundra zone of the Yakutsk region.

The land fauna of the Okhotsk-Kamchatka country differs little from the Siberian. Its marine fauna has an incomparably greater importance for the district, for the simple reason that nowhere does the marine fauna of the polar seas come so far south as in Behring Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk whither, together with marine currents and icebergs, the mammals and fish of the Arctic Ocean penetrate in large numbers.

The Sea of Okhotsk, occupying an extensive area between the coast of the Asiatic continent and the peninsula of Kamchatka, and shut in on the south-east by the Kuril ridge, which leaves as many as 20 convenient entrances into it from the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan, is placed in quite exceptional climatic conditions. Notwithstanding its geographical



situation in the temperate zone, between 44° and 62° north latitude, it possesses the type of a polar sea, like Hudson's Bay. The greatest depth of the Sea of Okhotsk in its centre is apparently not more than 1,400 to 1,500 feet. While towards the end of the summer in July and August the temperature of the water upon the surface of the sea rises to 7° and even 10°, that at a depth of over 100 feet is below 0° C., and deeper than 700 feet it is -1.5°. Lower than 1,350 feet, the water being salter, the temperature again rises, reaching 2.4° and remains so to the bottom of the sea. But however this may be, the Sea of Okhotsk has all the appearance of what might be called a «tundra» sea, from the valleys of the northern shore of which are carried to the south the so-called «scum» or ice masses floating almost the whole summer on the Sea of Okhotsk. In summer the floating ice collects especially in the southern part of the sea, off the coast to the east of Sakhalin and around the Shantar islands and even in the Amour frith. In Udsch Bay the ice clears out only in July, in Tugursk Bay it holds till August. The marine currents of the Okhotsk sea on its eastern Kamchatka shore flow apparently on the whole in a northerly direction, and from its north-eastern Ghizhiginsk and Penzhinsk extremities swerve to the west, and afterwards following the change of direction of the coastline turn to the south, passing by the eastern shore of Sakhalin. These currents it is that fill the whole south-western part of the sea in summer with floating ice, in some places forming an obstacle to ships entering it from the Pacific Ocean.

Both the subaqueous flora and the invertebrate fauna of the Okhotsk Sea are extremely rich in comparison with not only those of the Northern Ocean coast, but even with those of Behring Sea. As many as 53 species of seaweeds (algae) have been found in this sea. The algae here, moreover, bear a much greater resemblance to the flora of the Arctic Ocean than to that of the Pacific. The majority of the seaweeds of the European Arctic Ocean are also to be found in the Sea of Okhotsk, while the flora of this sea presents very few species common to the Pacific, possessing however not a few peculiar species. The Sea of Okhotsk is extraordinarily rich in mollusks. As many as 70 species of shellfish have been found there, of which 31 species belong to the general polar or circumpolar forms, 15 to the polar forms of Behring Sea, 14 to the Pacific fauna, also met with upon the American coasts, and finally 10, peculiar to the Sea of Okhotsk itself. Twenty-one species of crustaceans have been found, 5 of these circumpolar, 5 Pacific, and 11 peculiar to Okhotsk. There is scant information on the fish of the Sea of Okhotsk, but the pisciae wealth of this sea is very considerable. In particular the «keta» (*salmo lagocephalus*) and «malma» (*salma callaris*) are met here in countless shoals. It is a natural consequence of the wealth of the marine flora and fauna of the Sea of Okhotsk and of its polar character, that this sea has ever been the chosen hunting ground of large marine mammals, swimming hither from the Arctic Ocean. Among these must be counted not only several species of seal (*phoca barbata*, *groenlandica*, *leonina*, *nautica*, *numularia* and *ochotensis*), dolphins (*phocaena orca*, *delphinapteros leucas*); but three species of whale of which only one has been identified with certainty (*balaenoptera longimana*). The whaling industry began to be developed here in the forties of the present century, and since 1847 the American whalers have not given these creatures one single year's rest, and have carried away, according to the testimony of the American ship owners, in the 14 years between 1847 and 1861, blubber and whale bone to the amount of 130,000,000 dollars, employing

annually for the purpose 200 vessels. Under somewhat different conditions is Behring Sea, since the surrender to the United States of the Russian possessions in America, enjoyed in common by the States and Russia. It is bounded on the south, that is on the side of the Pacific by the ridge of the Aleutian islands, and on the north communicates with the Frozen Ocean by means of Behring Straits. Situated in more northern latitudes, between 52° and 64° N. lat., and separated from the Pacific Ocean only by a ridge of islands interrupted by sea channels, Behring Sea is a type not of a close mediterranean sea like that of Okhotsk, but of an ocean sea open at both ends, whose climate is still more marine at all seasons of the year than that of the Sea of Okhotsk. It is enough to state that in the southern part of the sea with a mean annual temperature of 3°, the average temperature of the coldest month is a little below zero, and that of the hottest 7°, to understand why all the islands of Behring Sea are devoid of trees. No agriculture is possible upon them, and both these islands and the shores of Behring Sea are incapable of settled colonization, and are for ever doomed to be restricted to the working of their marine resources. The water flora of Behring Sea is poorer than that of Okhotsk, but it cannot be called absolutely poor, and it is at any rate incomparably richer than the flora of the Siberian coast of the Arctic Ocean.

Thanks to this circumstance and to the abundance of mollusks, crustaceans and fish, this sea like that of Okhotsk has always been a splendid feeding ground for marine animals, which once used to visit these shores in countless numbers, in particular the islands of Behring Sea. The most interesting of these visitors was, till the commencement of this century, the huge animal, 35 feet in length and weighing 50,000 pounds, known by the name of the seacow (*rytina Stelleri*), first described by the highly talented fellow traveller of Behring, the Russian naturalist Steller; this enormous beast has now entirely vanished from the face of the earth, like the mammoth of the prehistoric age and the great birds dodo and moa in more recent times. The last seacows were killed on Behring island, one of the most remarkable islands in the world, alike from a geographical and from a natural history point of view, in 1780. According however to information gathered by Nordenskjöld the half-castes of Behring island saw seacows last as late as 1855. Another visitor of the islands of Behring Sea, the so-called sea lion or «sivuch» (*eumetopias Stelleri* Less.) has now become so rare that it is only seen in individual specimens. On the other hand Behring Sea and especially Behring islands are still rich in seals (*otaria ursina*), of which annually from 10,000 to 50,000 are taken. One other very valuable visitor of the Behring islands is the so-called Kamchatka or sea beaver (*enhydris lutris* L.), which in zoological respects has nothing in common with the genus beaver (*biber*) or otter (*lutra*), but belongs to a genus of animals analogous to the morse (*trichecus rosmarus*). Of the remaining marine mammals the same occur in Behring Sea as in that of Okhotsk, namely species of seals, dolphins and whales. Behring Sea is also extraordinarily abundant in fish. Some kinds of fish as for example herrings, cod and gwyniad, appear periodically off the islands and shores of Behring Sea from April to July in countless numbers. Finally, upon the shores and islands of this sea breed several kinds of land fur animals, as for example river beavers, otters, arctic foxes, foxes, sables and muskrats.

Possessing such extremely unfavourable conditions, not so much on account of its geographical situation as of its climate, the Okhotsk-Kamchatka region, being included among

the hyperborean countries, has a quite insignificant population. Its 35,000 inhabitants makes a little more than one to the square geographical mile, the number of the Russian contingent not exceeding 7,000, or 20 per cent of the total population. Half of the Russian people are distributed through small towns, containing 11 per cent of the inhabitants of the country. The native tribes consist of wandering Chukches, Koriaks, Kamchadals, Lamuts, and reindeer Tunguz. Evidently, the whole Okhotsk-Kamchatka country, like the neighbouring Yakutsk region of Eastern Siberia, is absolutely unadapted to premanent agricultural colonization and possesses the very smallest capacity for settlement, which can only be enlarged by the development, protection and regulation of the sea industries.



## CHAPTER VI.

**The Kirghiz Steppe Region.**

Its division into the mountain and steppe territories; orography and hydrography of each; climatic conditions; vegetable covering; fauna; composition and distribution of the population in the mountain and steppe zones; importance of cattle breeding to the native population.

THE Kirghiz steppe region in an administrative sense forms the steppe Governor-Generalship and is composed of three territories, Akmolinsk, Semipalatinsk and Semirechensk. In a geographical sense it occupies the southern part of the river region of the Irtysh and the basins of several central Asiatic rivers, not possessing sea communication, but either falling into Lake Balkhash, as the Ili and other rivers of Semirechia, Lake Issyk-Kul and Ala-Kul or losing themselves in the sands or steppe marshes.

The whole Kirghiz region occupies a space of 25,000 square geographical miles and may be divided into two parts, mountain and steppe. The former consists of the whole Semirechensk territory, except the Sergiopol district, and of the Zaissan district of Semipalatinsk, and occupies 7,000 square geographical miles, the latter comprises the whole remaining space of 18,000 square geographical miles.

To the mountain zone belongs the gigantic Russian western Thian-Shan with the exception of its western prolongations, which cross over into the Turkestan Governor-Generalship. Like the Sayan-Altai mountain system, the Thian-Shan at its western extremity branches into separate mountain ridges partly parallel to each other, partly spreading out like the feathers of a slightly opened fan. In the main range of the Thian-Shan on the Chinese frontier a little north of 42° N. lat. is the highest peak, mount Khan-Tengri, lifting itself above a whole group of gigantic snow-clad summits and reaching an altitude of 24,000 feet. The glaciers descending from the Khan-Tengri group feed, on the one hand, the upper waters of the Tekes, that is, the head stream of the chief river of Semirechia, the Ili, falling into Lake Balkhash, on the other hand, tributaries themselves feeding the hollow of lake Issyk-Kul, and yet again, the head waters of the Sary-Dzhaz, which has its source on the northern slope of the Thian-Shan, but breaks through a defile in that range on its southern side and falls into the river Parim, belonging to the system of lake Lob-Nor. At the same time, a little further to the west, the river Naryn, the head waters of the Yaxartes or Syr-Darya springs from the lakes lying on the extensive alpine tablelands or «sazas» of the Thian-

Shan, at a height of 13,000 feet. From Khan-Tengri, the Thian-Shan range already shews a tendency to branch into ridges, lying almost parallel to each other. The southern of these forms the Chinese frontier and is separated from the more northern by longitudinal valleys, in which flow the rivers Sarydzhas and Naryn. The crests of these separate ridges consist of an uninterrupted series of snow-clad summits, the passes between which attain an absolute height from 10,000 to 13,000 feet, and are very rugged. Finally, the northernmost ridge of the Thian-Shan descends into the long deep valley stretching from west to east of the large and beautiful lake of Issyk-Kul, situated at a height of 5,300 feet. But still further north than lake Issyk-Kul rises also above the limits of eternal snow a double range, that is split into two parallel ridges by a longitudinal valley, the chain of the Zailisk Altai, which is connected with the Thian-Shan by mountain spurs at its northern depressed extremity. At its very centre it reaches a height of 15,000 feet, and over a considerable part of the Zailisk Altai the passes over both its ridges attain an altitude of 9,000 feet and are very difficult to climb. The splendid northern acclivity of the Thian-Shan descends to the broad steppe valley of the Ili, but upon its northern side the Semirechensk range or Dzhungar Altai rises again to the snow line, and at its eastern extremity, within Chinese territory, is in immediate connexion with the Thian-Shan. Finally, still further to the north, in parallel 47° N. lat., stretches the Tarbagatai range also clad in eternal snows, and parallel to the general direction of the Thian-Shan, reaching an extreme limit of 10,000 feet. The deep hollow of Lake Zaissan lying at a height of 1,356 feet, and of the Black Irtysh which falls into it, divides Tarbagatai from the Narym range of the southern ridge of the Altai system. The mountains of the Thian-Shan and of the two Altai consist mainly of the crystalline rocks, granite, syenite, gneiss, diorite, porphyry, and of the metamorphic rocks, crystalline schist; but volcanic rocks have so far not been seen in the Thian-Shan. Upon the mountain slopes are also found rocks in beds lifted up by the crystalline formations. Wherever fossils were met with in the stratified rocks they betray the fact that the latter belong to the paleozoic formations of the devonian and carboniferous systems. Secondary formations, namely jurassic, are found in the continuations and offsets of the Thian-Shan range in the Turkestan territory. At the foot of all the mountains described extend zones excellently watered wherever there are snow peaks, and covered with a fertile soil by the torrents, descending from them and extremely convenient for agriculture and settled colonization, but not otherwise than with the aid of artificial irrigation. Unfortunately, these zones are narrow; they occupy a submountainous tract of an elevation of 1,800 to 5,000 feet above sea level, in the Issyk-Kul valley even attaining 7,000 feet, above which the cultivation of grain reaches its limit, ceasing also wherever the mountains descend below the snow line and accordingly do not feed any torrents. Moreover these streams lead away into «aryks» or irrigation canals, become quickly exhausted, and passing over into the hot and arid zone lying below 2,000 feet, being absorbed by the sands or rapidly evaporating, fall it might almost be said into the atmospheric ocean. Therefore of the rivers of Semirechia only the full flowing Ili reaches as it should the extensive Lake Balkhash, bounding this region on the north-east, the other quite insignificant streams, Koksus, Karatal, Bien, Aksu, Baskan and Lepsa, either become lost in shallow washes among the sands, or like the last named, in the impene-

trable reeds of the shore of Lake Balkhash. This lake, gradually drying up and retreating from the submountainous region, has left between the latter and its south-eastern shore line a desert and unfruitful space at least 1,000 square geographical miles in extent. Thus, that part of the foothill zone which, from its absolute height, irrigation and soil, may be regarded as an area suitable to colonization, scarcely amounts to more than 1,000 square geographical miles, even reckoning in the valleys adapted to cultivation.

The submountainous zone of the Kirghiz steppe region, extending between the Thian-Shan and Altai, is almost the best part of Siberia, and is remarkable also on account of the fact that it played a great part in the history of the great migration of peoples, beginning with the movement of the Huns to the west already in the second century before Christ and ending with the great Mongolian irruption of the thirteenth century. All the national migrations starting from the interior of Asia were caused by the fact that the nomad population of Central Asia gradually increasing reached the limits of the capacity of the country, and then was compelled to seek an exit either to the far east into the rich and fertile plains of the Chinese Empire, or to the far west, at first into the Aral-Caspian plain, and later, turning the Si-Khai, the «distant west», that is, the Caspian Sea, on the north or south, into Europe. But as the elevated region of Central Asia between the Thian-Shan and the Himalaya range on the side of the Aral-Caspian depression is shut in by such lofty mountains, whose passage is entirely impossible for nomads moving with all their herds, the importance in the history of national migrations of those three wide and convenient intervals, which are situated between the Thian-Shan and the Altai in the region under consideration, is evident. These gaps are, the wide valley of the Ili between the two Altai, the depression surrounding Lake Alacul, between the Semirechian Altai and Tarbagatai, and the Circumzaissan plain between Tarbagatai and the Altai. These three intervals in the mountains served as wide gates for the exodus of the nomads with the low-lying plain, now called the Kirghiz steppe.

The steppe district of the Kirghiz steppe region differs entirely from not only the zone just considered, but also from the neighbouring Western Siberian plain. The Kirghiz steppe is unlike the latter in that it does not present an absolute level. On the contrary it is for a considerable extent intersected by low, but very prominent mountain ridges and masses, consisting for the most part of granite, diorite, diabase, porphyry and other crystalline rocks. Granitic mountains rear themselves above the steppe in the form of crests, while the porphyritic are arranged for the most part in groups of cupola-shaped summits, the resulting effect being a very varied contour. The steppe character of the Kirghiz country appears in the extreme scantiness of its watering and in the almost complete absence of forest vegetation, which only occurs in the north-western corner of the steppe in the Kokchetavsk district of the Akmolinsk Territory. Only the north-eastern portion of the steppe is watered by the Irtysh, while through the north-western flows a large tributary of the same river, the Ishim. All the other rivers of the steppe as for example the Nura, Sary-Su, and Chu bear the character of sluggish prairie streams, disappearing in overflows, which rapidly evaporate in the sandy waste. The low mountain ridges, intersecting the steppe, contain various minerals, such as copper and argentiferous lead ores. In the Kokbekta district of the Semipalatinsk territory occur deposits of gold. But the absence of fuel places mining industry here under unfavourable conditions.

The greater part of the steppe is only suited to the existence of nomads, as it contains very few oases adapted to cultivation and colonization. The climate of the steppe portion of the Kirghiz steppe region is considerably warmer than in the neighbouring cultivated or agricultural zone of Western Siberia, but still more continental. The mean annual temperature in Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk lying in  $51^{\circ}$  and  $50^{\frac{1}{2}}^{\circ}$  N. lat., is from  $2^{\circ}$  to  $2.5$  Celsius, that is,  $2^{\circ}$  higher than in Siberia. The temperature in winter is  $-16^{\circ}$ , that of the coldest month  $-18.5^{\circ}$ , almost identical with the Western Siberia agricultural zone. But the average summer temperature, rising as high as  $20^{\circ}$  and of the hottest month  $22^{\circ}$ , is more considerable than in Western Siberia. The difference of temperature in summer and winter,  $36^{\circ}$ , as also that between the hottest and coldest months,  $40^{\circ}$ , are greater than in Western Siberia. The mean temperature of the five-months vegetative period ( $18^{\circ}$ ) considerably exceeds that of Western Siberia. On the other hand the amount of atmospheric precipitation in the course of the year in Akmolinsk only reaches 229 millimetres, of which 166 fall to the three summer months, and in Semipalatinsk 186 millimetres, of which 80 are in summer. Still less moisture falls in the southern part of the steppe, of which an idea may be formed from the observations taken in the Turgai bordering on this country. There the fall in the course of the year is 122 millimetres, of which only 16 millimetres belong to the summer. In the Hungry-Steppe or Bed-Pak-Dala, lying on the southern frontier of the steppe on the river Chu, there is no rain at all in summer. Evidently there being no possibility of irrigation, as the river Chu is very shallow, this zone is nothing but a dead wilderness.

Incomparably more favourable are the climatic conditions of the submountainous region. According to the averages derived from the observations made in Vierny and Kuldzha, that is, in the foot hills of the Transilian Altai and the Thian-Shan about  $44^{\circ}$  N. lat., the annual temperature is  $9^{\circ}$  Celsius, that in winter only  $-6^{\circ}$ , that of the coldest month  $-10^{\circ}$ , of summer  $22^{\circ}$ , and of the hottest month  $26^{\circ}$ . The difference between summer and winter is  $28^{\circ}$ , that between the coldest and hottest months  $36^{\circ}$ . Almost as mild is the climate of Kopal, situated  $2^{\circ}$  further north in the submountainous region of the Semirechensk Altai. Here the mean annual temperature is  $7.5^{\circ}$ , of winter  $-5^{\circ}$ , of the coldest month  $-6^{\circ}$ , of summer  $20^{\circ}$ , of the hottest month  $21^{\circ}$ . The difference between winter and summer is  $25^{\circ}$ , and between the hottest and coldest months  $27^{\circ}$ . The average temperature of the five-months vegetative period is  $21^{\circ}$  in Vierny and Kuldzha, and  $18^{\circ}$  in Kopal. The mild winters afford a sufficient explanation why in this country not only is gardening possible, which does not exist anywhere in Siberia, but even grape growing. Vierny has a precipitation of more than 560 millimetres a year, of which most falls in spring, namely 226 millimetres, and in summer 115 millimetres. Such a climate may be counted among the best in Russia.

The vegetable covering of the submountainous region is luxuriant and extremely varied, the more so that the climatic zones are there disposed in layers one above another and exhibit perfectly different types of vegetation. The greatest resemblance to the flora of Russia is presented by that of the foothills at an elevation of 2,000 to 7,500 feet, that is, that part which is most capable of development in reference to civilized and settled life, and in which are placed all the Russian colonies of the country. At 7,500 feet the forest vegetation ceases; above spreads the zone of alpine meadows, while below 2,500 feet the

scantly watered country takes the character of the steppe portion of the region under consideration.

The forest growth of the submountainous and mountainous zones, from 2,000 to 7,500 feet in altitude is not very varied. Among the conifers upon the slopes of both the Altai and the Thian-Shan occurs a fine kind of fir, which Russian botanists have named *picea Schrenkiana* Fisch., but which has proved to be the same as one of the Himalayan species (*abies Smithiana* Bed.). Further the character of a tree is possessed by the kind of juniper (*juniperus pseudosabina* Fisch.) more often adhering to the rocks, but at times rising in the form of thick and lofty but very crooked trees, as for example in the Buam defile.

Of the deciduous species here occur the common birch (*betula alba* L.), the scented poplar (*populus suaveolens* Fisch.), a low kind of maple (*acer Semenovii* Reg.) almost identical with that of the Amour (*acer ginnala*), the common rowan (*pyrus aucuparia* L.) the wild apple not met with in Siberia (*pyrus malus*) and the apricot (*prunus armeniaca* L.) producing even in the wild state very good fruit. The shrubs are somewhat more varied. Among them there are common European species, as for example, sallow-thorn (*rhamnus catharticus* L.), a bramble (*rubus caesius* L.), two wild roses (*rosa pimpinellifolia* D.C. and *rosa cinamomea* L.), the snow-ball tree (*viburnum opulus* L.), honeysuckle (*lonicera xylosteum* and *coerulea* L.), species of willow (*salix nigricans* Sm. and *salix purpurea* L.), and of the conifers, *ephedra vulgaris* Rich. and *juniperus sabina* L. There are also Caucasian species, a cherry (*prunus prostrata* Lab.), gatten tree (*cotoneaster numularia* Fisch.), currant (*ribes petraeum* Wulf.), and one species occurring in Finland and the extreme north of Russia and Siberia, *hipophoea rhamnoides* L. The siberian altaic species include, *rosa alpina* L., *crataegus sanguinea* Pall., *lonicera microphylla*, W., *lonicera hispida* L., *salix sibirica* Pall. But most interesting of all are a few local forms, a traveller's joy (*clematis soongorica* Bge), berberry (*berberis heteropoda* Schr.), spindle-tree (*evonymus Semenovii* Reg.), a rose (*rosa platyacantha* Schr.). Of the herbaceous plants of the cultivated mountainous zone 70 per cent belong to species also found in European Russia. Of Asiatic species half occur in the Altai-Sayan upland or in the Siberian plain; three species, *dracocephalum heterophyllum* Benth. and two rhubarbs (*rheum Emodi* Wall. and *rheum spiciforme* Royle.) belong to the Himalayan flora and more than 50 species are peculiar to the local flora. Especially among these are a few crow's foots (*ranunculus soongoricus* Schr. and *aquilegia lactiflora* Kar.), astragals (*astragalus leucocladus* Bge. and *oxytropis merckensis* Bge.), compositae (*cousinia Semenovii* Reg. and *cousinia uncinata* Reg.), of the calycifloreae (*pedicularis Semenovii* Reg., *eremostachys Sewertsovii*, Herd.) and finally some beautiful bulbous plants, as *heningia robusta* Reg. It is remarkable that in this zone a few European cultivated plants are met with growing wild, as for example rye (*secale cereale* L.) and hemp (*cannabis sativa* L.).

Quite different is the character of the vegetation on the luxuriant meadows of the Alpine zone. Here there is no forest growth, only a few shrubs forcing their way in, reaching here their highest limit. Among them especially remarkable are two strange forms of acacia (*caragana jubata* Pall.) and a second species undescribed, which with their thickly clustered foliage and hard woody stalks sticking upright and furnished with long needles, resemble the tails of some large animals, such as the camel. Their dense pale grey leaves beautifully divided as



in all acacias and papilionaceous flowers tender yellow in the case of one species and pale rose in the other are a strange charm to these bushes so characteristic of the Alpine zone of the Thian-Shan. Of the other bushes the following Siberian Altaic species attain the alpine zone: two meadow sweets (*spiraea*), *potentilla fruticosa* L., one species of gatten-tree (*cotoneaster*), and one of tamariks (*myricaria Davurica* Ehr.), currant (*ribes*), willow (*salix Sibirica* Pall.). The local forms are two species of honeysuckle (*lonicera humilis* Kar. and *L. Karelini* Bge.) and one currant (*ribes heterotrichum* Mey.). The Alpine herbaceous flora attains here a peculiar luxuriance and variety, with only 15 per cent of general European and 15 per cent of Caucasian plants. Of the remaining 70 per cent of Asiatic species more than half are met with on the Altai-Sayan «bieloks» and «golets», 7 species on the Himalayan range, while not less than 70 species form a speciality of the local flora and probably will be found again only in the Alps of Central Asia. The 7 species are: *anemone Falconeri* Th., *anemone micrantha* Kl., *corydalis Gortchakovii* Schr., *oxytropis Kashmiriana* Camb., *sedum coccineum* Royl., *carum indicum* Lindl., *gentiana Kurroo* Royl. Among the 70 species referred to the most remarkable are: one species of aconite (*aconitum grandiflorum* Kar.), a beautiful species of fumitory, recently adopted for cultivation, (*corydalis Semenovi* Reg.), 22 new species of astragals, mostly of the genus *oxytropis* so characteristic of the Asiatic Alps, several thick-leaved plants (*umbilicus alpestris* Kar., *umbilicus Semenovi* Reg., *sedum gelidum* Schr.), *umbelliferae* (for example, *peucedanum transiliense* Reg. and *Semenovia transiliensis* Reg.), ten new species of composite cotton-thistles (as, *cirsium nidulans* Reg. and *cirsium Semenovi* Reg., *sanssurea glacialis* Herd. and *sorocephala* Schr., *alfredia nivea* Kar., *jurinea suffruticosa* Reg.), a beautiful species of primulaceae (*cortusa Semenovi* Led.), species of gentians (*gentiana Olivieri* Gris., *swertia marginata* Schr.) and some beautiful bulbous plants, as *crocus alatavicus* Sem., *orithya heterophylla* Reg., *fritillaria pallidiflora* Schr., *fritillaria Severtzovii* Reg. and 5 species of onion (*allium*), of which one (*allium Semenovi* Reg.) covers the «sazas» or elevated Alpine meadows of the Thian-Shan with its large golden yellow flowers. It is from this characteristic species that the Thian-Shan received its chinese name of Tsun-Lin or Onion Mountains.

The vegetation of the lower steppe zone of the submountainous region, below 2,000 feet, approaches the type of the flora of the whole steppe territory of the Kirghiz region, in other words, to that of the Aralo-Caspian depression. This vegetation in the Kirgbiz steppe region is in the highest degree peculiar and distinct, compared not only with that of European Russia and Siberia, but with that of their steppes. In it are clearly reflected the climatic conditions; the intensity of the summer heats, the severity of the winters and the absence of moisture. As already stated there are no forests, particularly no conifers in the Kirghiz steppe, with the exception of the Kokchetav district, but trees grow along the courses of the rivers. Here belong: a particular kind of ash (*fraxinus potamophylla* Herd.) and four kinds of poplar, *populus laurifolia* Led., *populus nigra* L., *populus euphratica* (Ol. and p. *pruinosa* Schr.), as also three European sorts of willow (*salix fragilis* L., s. *purpurea* L., s. *viminalis* L.) and a very tall species of barberry with roundish rose-coloured berries (*berberis integerrima* Bge).

Much more characteristic for the steppe flora are its low growing shrubs, frequently prickly, often covered with a gray or silvery foliage and not seldom characterised by their crookedness. They belong to the families of rues (*rutaceæ*), *haplophyllum Sieversii* Fisch. and

latifolium Kar.; legumiosæ, halimodendron argenteum Lam., sphaerophysa salsula Pall., ammodendron Sieversii Fisch.; roses (rosacæ), Hultheimia berberifolia Pall.; tamariks (tamariscinæ), tamarix hispida W. and myricaria alopecuroides Schr.; currants (ribesiaceæ), ribes discantha Pall.; solanum (solanæ), lycium turcomanicum Fisch.; buckwheat (polygoneæ), three new species, a calligonum and two atraphaxis.

Yet more characteristic are the steppe herbaceous plants. Among them are not more than 40 per cent of European species, and they for the most part belong, like the two species of feather grass (*stipa pennata* L. and *capillata* L.), to the steppe forms of European Russia, or like the curious plant of the sandy deserts belonging to the exotic family of balanophoræ (*cynomorium coccineum* L.) are met with on the sandy shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Further, besides plants occurring all over the Aralo-Caspian depression, Russian explorers of the steppe flora of the Kirghiz region, such as Karelin, Shrenk, Semionov, Sievertsev, and Baron Osten-Saken, have discovered here as many as 150 new species, characteristic of this flora, among them 30 species of astragals alone, and 10 salicornias (salsolacæ). The following forms are particularly worthy of mention, *leontice vesicaria* Bge., *megacarpæa laciniata* D., *physolepidium repens* Schr., *acanthophyllum spinosum* Mey, and *paniculatum* Reg., *orobus Semenovi*, Reg. *alhagi camelorum* Fisch., *eryngium macrocalyx* M., *dipsacus azureus* Schr., *karelinia caspica* Led., *acanthocephalus amplicaulis* Kar., *saussurea Semenovi* Kar., and *coronata* Schr., *echenais sieversi* Fisch., *streptorhempus hispidulus* Reg., non-climbing bind-weeds (*convolvulus Semenovi* Reg. and *subsericeus* Schr.), *physochlaena Semenovi* Reg., *eremostachys sanguinea* Jaub. and *rotata* Schr.); 4 species of statice (*Semenovi* Herd, *otolepis* Schr. etc.); 5 new species of spurge (*euphorbia*), irises (*iris soongorica* Schr.), bulbous plants, *rhinopetalum Karelini* Fisch. and 4 species of onions; finally some characteristic grasses (*gramineæ*), as *elymus lanuginosus* Fr., *nephelochloa soongorica* Gris., *aelorupus intermedius* Reg. et cetera.

The fauna of the invertebrates in the Kirghiz steppe region is as peculiar and original as the flora. The difference between it and that of Western Siberia and European Russia is striking. On the other hand it is beyond doubt that this fauna differs very little from that of the deserts and steppes of the Aralo-Caspian depression. The fauna of the submountainous zone presents quite a different character, bearing a close resemblance to that of Turkestan and the Pamir. Among the coleopterous insects not only of the sandy desert of the steppe zone, but throughout the whole of it, the sluggishly moving tenebrionidae, without wings under their hard coherent elytra, predominate. On the contrary, in the mountainous zone of the Thian-Shan and Alatau the tenebrionidae, who like the dry steppe, are met with in smaller numbers, while here occur numerous kinds of carabidae, among which are very rare mountain forms characteristic of the Central Asiatic mountainous zones.

Of the vertebrates a great number of birds come during winter from the far north and nestle in the steppe and submountainous regions. The ornithological fauna of this region is especially rich. In the warm valleys exist different species of fowls, as also the most beautiful sorts of Asiatic pheasants; on the rivers and lakes is found a great variety of birds, native of the Mediterranean basin, among which are covies of pelicans; and on the

Alpian zone, numbers of mountainous birds, the greater part of which are natives of the Asiatic mountains.

Even the fauna of the mammals is much richer and more varied than in Siberia. The tiger and the irbis (*felis irbis*) reach the northern limit of their distribution in the reeds of Balkhash, but occasionally stray northward into the neighbourhood of the Alatau. Wild boars occur in all the submountainous zone, in the Thian-Shan and Transilian Alatau. There are two species of bear belonging to the Pamir and the range of the Himalai (*ursus thibetanus* and *isabellinus*). Besides the «arkhar» (*ovis argali*), extremely common in the alpine and subalpine zones of the Thian-Shan and both Alatau, the kochgar, a mountain sheep first described by the celebrated traveller, Marco Polo, and subsequently called in his honour, *ovis Polii*, from the horns and skeletons found in abundance on the Pamir, breeds in the wildest parts of the Thian-Shan. This species was long considered extinct, until discovered by the most recent Russian travellers, Semionov, Sievertsov and Przhevalsky. In the mountainous zone of the submountainous region also breed the *cervus pygargus*, *capra sibirica*, several species of «saiga» (for example *antilope subgutturosa*) and the porcupine (*hystrix*), while the steppe zone contains «kulans» (*egvus hemionus*).

Passing next to man, it must be observed that the whole population of the Kirghiz steppe region amounts to 1,860,000 souls, of whom the immigrant Russians form only 14 per cent (260,000), and the remainder, 86 per cent, belong to the native tribes of Central Asia. Of the latter, the Tartars and Sarts (35,000) live principally in towns and permanent settlements, the Dungans and Taranch (86,000) employed in agriculture, may also be reckoned to the settled population of the country, while the Kirghiz (146,000) and Kalmyks (25,000) are nomads, living almost exclusively by cattle breeding. The Kirghiz, in number the predominating tribe of the region, speak a Tiurk idiom, but in effect in their origin form a motley amalgamation of various tribes, who were attracted hither in the XIIIth century by the last mass migration of Mongols and who squatted here, on the road taken by the great migration, on the first spots suitable for a nomad life met with by the wanderers from the mountainous region of Asia. As among the people who entered into the composition of the Kirghiz alliance, the Tiurk tribes had a numerical preponderance, all the Kirghiz adopted their language, but the various clans and tribes have preserved to this day their clannish and tribal names, thus betraying their true nationality. The total number of the Kirghiz exceeds 3,000,000 souls, of whom 1,470,000 dwell in the steppe Governor-Generalship, 760,000 in the Turgai and Ural territories, 740,000 in Turkestan, and over 140,000 in the home Kirghiz Bukeev horde in European Russia.

In the two component parts of the Kirghiz steppe region the population is unequally divided. In the steppe part of the region live 1,000,000 inhabitants, making 55 to the square geographical mile. Russians form here 20 per cent, or 210,000, of the population, merely because the former Siberian Irtysh colony, except three large towns, Semipalatinsk, Omsk and Petropavlovsk, is wholly settled by them, as well as a whole string of Kossack camps or «stanitsas» and hamlets which served formerly as the fortifications of the frontier line. Within the steppe zone there are very few permanent Russian settlements, as suitable spots for agricultural colonies occur here only as rare and limited oases, and if the Siberian Irtysh

ine be left out of the account, the proportion of the permanent Russian population in the Kirghiz steppe will not exceed 2 or 3 per cent. On the whole the towns of the steppe zone contain 100,000 souls or 10 per cent of the total population. Of the towns, actual importance as centres of trade and industry, possess only Omsk (34,000 inhabitants), Semipalatinsk (18,000 inhabitants) and Petropavlovsk (16,000 inhabitants).

The submountainous zone of the Kirghiz region is situated under different circumstances. Here 860,000 inhabitants find a place, there being over 120 to the square geographical mile. Russians form 7 per cent of the total population or 60,000. Adding to them the Tartars and Sarts which have their permanent abodes in the Russian settlements, as well as the agricultural Dungans and Taranch, the number of the fixed population forms 18 per cent, while in the towns alone dwell less than 6 per cent of the total population (50,000). Among all of them Vierny, with its 25,000 inhabitants, alone possesses the importance of a true town, and which enjoyed a flourishing existence until its destruction by an earthquake.

The distribution of the population in the submountainous zone and in particular the relation of the fixed population to the nomad, can be made quite clear by dividing the whole submountainous zone according to absolute altitude into vertical zones or levels. The lowest or steppe zone, the hottest and driest, and in winter the freest from snow, occupies the portions of the foothills lying below 2,500 feet, and is taken up with the winter quarters of the nomads, who here find abundant fodder for their herds under the snow. This fodder is formed of grasses, such as *schismus minutus*, *crypsis schoenoides*, small species of *triticum* and the like which rapidly dry up on the approach of the summer heats. The true submountainous zone, following with an elevation of 2,500 to something over 5,000 feet, includes all the fixed settlements and arable land of the country and represents a level occupied almost exclusively by a permanent population, through which the nomads pass without stopping by definite roads or tracts, proceeding in summer from the winter quarters to their beautiful cool mountain pastures. Before the arrival of the Russians, the Kirghiz were employed, although to a limited extent, with agriculture in this cultivated level, and had here their fields which they sowed with the aid of irrigation on their way to their summer grounds. With the coming of the Russian settlers, the Kirghiz surrendered to them the whole of the second level of the country, but lost nothing by this, as the abandonment by them of inconsiderable tracts of arable land was fully compensated by the sale to Russian agriculturalists of the produce of Kirghiz cattle breeding; the former supplying them in turn with grain. The third level, from 5,000 to 8,000 feet in altitude, is the forest zone, providing a subsidiary industry to the Russian permanent settlements of the submountainous zone. Finally, the fourth level, upon which the Kirghiz have their excellent summer pastures, extends from 8,000 to 11,000 feet, that is to the limits of eternal snow. This is a zone of alpine meadows, occupied only in summer almost exclusively by Kirghiz nomad camps.

The pastoral life of 80 per cent of the population of the country is reflected in the number of domestic animals bred in the Kirghiz steppe zone, the proportion of which to every 100 inhabitants here attains the maximum dimensions for the whole of Siberia. To each 100 inhabitants fall 100 horses, the absolute number being 1,800,000, 60 large horned cattle of a total 1,050,000, and 580 goats, the absolute number being 10,400,000. Finally,

even the quota of camels is 15 head to each 100 inhabitants. This is a direct proof of the fact that the Kirghiz steppe region is preeminently a cattle-rearing country and that only its foothills are capable of affording all the conveniences albeit of, a narrow, yet almost the best area for colonization in all Siberia. And this same area of colonization having already done its service to Russia, as only thanks to its development did the Russians become masters of Turkestan, has even to-day an immense importance for Russia, as the most solid and indestructible connecting link between the genuine Russian possessions in Siberia and Russia's Turkestan region.



## CHAPTER VII.

**Tenure and use of land.**

The foundations of land tenure and the forms of land usufruct; the dividing of Siberia into districts and their general character: the northern borderland, the transition zone, the agricultural region, the steppe districts, the Amour tract, agriculture; sketch of the conditions of the soil, systems of field culture and rotation of crops; tillage and cost of production of breadstuffs; proportion of seed for different crops; sale of grain and grain prices; agriculture in the steppes and the Amour tract; raising of cattle among the peasants, its extent and importance; kinds of animals, diseases; live stock industry among the Kirghiz.

THE whole of Siberia, alike that which is completely uninhabited and that which is settled by peasants of Russian origin or by the aborigines of the country, natives belonging to various tribes and classes, is reckoned as crown land. Exceptions to the general rule are, first of all, the southern part of the Tomsk government which forms under the name of the Altai mining district the property of His Majesty's Cabinet, and next a series of small parcels granted and sold in the fifties to various private persons, the lands of the monasteries, of the town communes, et cetera. But all forms of private land holdings are completely lost in the vast mass of Crown lands, both on account of their insignificant extent, and as regards their economical importance. Private owners have nowhere started regular management of their property; some exploit their estates by means of leasing their land to the peasants, and others have utterly neglected them, drawing from them no revenue whatever.

In Western Siberia the sale of lands to private persons continued until recent years when, with the abolition of the west Siberian Governor-Generalship, an Imperial order was given to discontinue the sale of Crown lands. Private owners in Western Siberia do not possess more than 300,000 dessiatines, exclusive of course of the Cabinet lands.

A very considerable portion of the lands belonging to the Crown and to the Cabinet, almost exclusively forests or regions not adapted to cultivation, is under the immediate control and disposition of the Government and the Cabinet which, where there is a possibility of so doing, draw an income from them by felling the timber and leasing the meadows and pastures, fishing rights et cetera. Another part, enormous in extent but insignificant in respect to the number of inhabitants living thereon, and its capacity for cultivation, namely,

the whole of the far north, consists entirely of *urmans*, *taigas* (uninhabited expanses of forest), *tundras* and wildernesses, a part being absolute desert, and a part being at the disorderly disposition of tribes of wandering natives. Finally, all the lands best fitted for agriculture and cattle raising, are in the usufruct of the peasants and of the more civilized natives. The latter use the land either on the basis of mere actual prescription, or on that of ancient documents existing in a great many native communities. The foundation of the peasants usufruct is extremely varied in its nature. The activity of the Government in introducing order into the use of the land by the peasants, which has already continued during several decades, is even now far from showing complete results. There still remain not a few peasant communities, and even whole *volosts*, in which the existing enjoyment of the land is restricted within no definite limits. The peasants dwell upon the Crown lands and use them to the extent permitted by their working powers and the amount of their capital. They plough, mow and harvest, cut timber, catch fish, as the expression is, wherever only «hatchet, scythe and plough may go». But the greater part of the peasant population use the land within definite limits, although these limits are without complete legal force.

Siberia has not yet seen a final land survey, like that which has established the surface relations of European Russia. Land has been allotted to the greater part of the peasants in the proportion of eighteen *dessiatines* per caput of the male population, according to the returns of the tenth census of 1859, with the addition, whenever possible, of three *dessiatines* for convict settlers. In some cases the provisions of land were made for a whole *volost* with a population ranging from 4 to 15 thousand souls, in others separately for each settlement; in yet other cases, for small groups containing each a few villages. In the first case, the territory of the whole *volost* was surrounded with one common boundary line, within which the peasants of all the settlements were given the right at their discretion either to use the land in common or to confine themselves by mutual agreement to separate subdivisions thereof. In the second case, such estates were laid out for the settlements by Government surveyors, and the *volost* consequently lost completely its territorial unity and preserved only an administrative importance. Finally, in the third case, both the *volost* and the settlement, remained only administrative units, while the group of settlements became the territorial unit.

The use of the land within each separate territorial unit, more or less extensive, was also organized in extremely various ways. It is true, the Russian peasant, at all times and in all places, at any rate in the explored parts of Siberia, brought with him the communal principle and even ingrafted it upon the natives. But this single principle was clothed in the most various forms. This is indeed comprehensible, for the forms of land tenure, if not entirely, yet to a considerable degree, are conditioned by the density of the population and the relative supply of land; and in this respect Siberia presents an extraordinary variety. Side by side with localities where there is, even till now, much more land than the population can till, there are, especially in Western Siberia and in particular in the Tobolsk government, not a few places where there are not more than six to eight *dessiatines* of land really fit for agriculture, per male inhabitant. There are, finally, even localities where, the tillable land has to be created by means of artificial irrigation, or on the contrary, by the removal of the superabundance of water. While furthermore, some places rich in arable

land suffer from a lack of meadows or from an absence of trees; others, on the contrary, present an unbroken dense forest or are exceedingly rich in meadows and pastures, but little suited to agricultural industry. It is evident then that all these and similar distinctions could not fail to be reflected in the forms of land tenure. These forms in Siberia exhibit an uninterrupted series, allowing the observation of the development of land usufruct under the influence of the increasing density of the population. Under such circumstances the high interest afforded by the investigation of Siberian institutions, that living spray from the history of the primitive forms of land enjoyment, is perfectly intelligible. Here of course it is impossible to refer to these institutions otherwise than in the most general terms, to characterize the most important types of the use of land, corresponding to the principal stages through which the people of the country are gradually passing.

In localities comparatively recently and very sparsely settled, mainly in Eastern Siberia and on the Amour, there predominates a form of land use which externally presents much resemblance to homestead, personal land tenure. The commune here has not yet had time to form, or if it exists, has no need to show its power. There is so much land that each may plough, mow, put under garden or hedge in as pasture lands, any space he likes, without incommoding any one else thereby. As a result of such enclosures, *zaimka*, or farmsteads are formed. Each peasant, even if he have a home in the village, builds himself structures in the field or forest wherein he lives in the summer and sometimes all the year round, all the land surrounding such a building becoming his *zaimka*, his sole property, where he alone ploughs, mows and pastures his cattle. *Zaimka*, in the sense of actual land enjoyment, is moreover perfectly possible without any buildings. The rights of the owner to the *zaimka* are almost unlimited. He owns within its bounds not only the land, which he is actually tilling at a given time, but that which lies waste and no one has the right to molest him thereon. Such land passes by inheritance, may be sold and leased, although the right in consequence of the abundance of free lands has rarely an opportunity of being realized. No one interferes with the occupant in his acts or dispositions referring to his land. The extent of the *zaimka* depends exclusively upon the degree of prosperity of each given owner. The *zaimka* of a rich man embraces 500 to 1,000 or more *dessiatines*, the average owner occupies 50 to 60 *dessiatines*, and a poor peasant, 5 to 10 *dessiatines*; the poor man cannot have any grudge against the rich man, as no one prevents him from seizing 1,000 *dessiatines* or more of the free land, if he wishes.

However there comes a time when there are no more free lands left, at any rate of good quality. Every convenient plat of ground has entered into the general total of the *zaimkas*, but nevertheless the growing population and immigrants require land for their use as well. Then the occupation form loses its *raison d'être*, and gradually a new form, the *volnaia* or free form of land usufruct is introduced. The essence of this form, observed principally in the governments of Tomsk and Tobolsk, consists in this, that everyone has the right only to that land into which he puts his labour, and only so long as he continues to till it. The peasant owns arable land so long as he ploughs it and sows it, but the moment he leaves it to rest, the land becomes free and the first comer may occupy and plough it afresh. Upon meadow lands the grass which has grown without individual labour



is free. Everyone mows where he will, and the hay becomes the property only of him, who cuts and preserves it. Free and accessible to all is the forest also, and only he may seize for his own exclusive use a given portion of wood, who has enclosed it with a ditch, cleared it of dead wood, and in general expended his labour upon it to protect it from fire. Finally, the pastures are also free; every member of the community may feed his cattle over the whole area appointed by the community for this purpose, but no one may enclose a single plat of pasture for his own exclusive use.

The occupation and free forms of enjoyment of land till to-day prevail in the greater part of Siberia; but with the increasing density of the excess of land, compared with the standard of labour, the free form begins to become as oppressive for the immigrant population as the occupation form had once appeared to be. Then gradually, at the cost of a severe struggle between the different groups of peasantry, entering into the composition of the community, a passage is accomplished to a communal form of enjoyment of the land in the narrow sense of the term, accompanied with a redivision. This passage begins ordinarily with that group of lands of which in each given place there is felt comparatively the greatest lack. The free and occupation forms, on the contrary, are preserved longest of all in regard to those lands, of which there is an abundance in the given commune and to those whose bringing under cultivation demands particularly a great expenditure of labour. The passage to a re-deal begins sometimes with the ploughed land, sometimes with the meadows, and sometimes with the forests or cedar groves.

The very forms of repartition met with in Siberia are exceedingly various. In regard to meadows everywhere, and when there is comparatively much arable land, forms of redistribution prevail which are completely distinct from those elaborated by the commune of European Russia. The principal distinctive peculiarity of Siberian repartitions is the striving to avoid the breaking up of the land into small lots; the latter are seldom less than a dessiatine. Another not less characteristic feature is, that it is not so much the area which is taken as the basis for the distribution of the land among the commoners, as the productiveness and other qualities of the soil, which determine its value for each given owner. Each commoner is allowed to take at his discretion a greater quantity of poor land remote from the homesteads or inconveniently situated, or on the contrary, a smaller quantity of good land or that which is situated near the house. In the localities where there is little arable land, principally the northern region of the agricultural part of the government of Tobolsk, on the contrary, methods of repartition have been established, on the whole agreeing with the Great Russia methods and characterized by a strict quantitative and qualitative equalization which is attained by breaking up the allotment per head into a large number of small lots.

The lands belonging to the Crown, peasant or native, occupied or waste, cover in Siberia vast areas measured by millions of square versts and hundreds of millions of dessiatines. Compared with the few millions, now forming the population of Siberia, these expanses seem infinite and the thought involuntarily arises that Siberia can make room for many tens of millions more of inhabitants, and for many tens, if not hundreds, of years guarantee European Russia from over population and serve, as it were, as a reserve, capable of taking

from the governments, suffering from a lack of land, all their surplus population. But if it be remembered that almost all Siberia lies in the same latitude with the expanse of British North America unsuited to agriculture, and only its southern borderlands are in the same latitude with the northern borders of the United States; if it be further remembered what are the climatic and, in general, the natural conditions of the greater part of Siberia, it will be clear that only a part of Siberia is destined by nature for civilized life. The vast regions of the north of Siberia are doomed for all time to remain entirely, or almost entirely, uninhabited and inaccessible to cultivation. Nor is this all; even where this cultivation already exists along the rivers at the present time or may develop in the more or less near future, the interriverine spaces present vast swamps, tundras or mountainous regions, absolutely unadapted to cultivation. Such a character is possessed by the central part of the Tobolsk and the northern part of the Tomsk governments, almost the whole of the Amour country, and the same may be said of the three steppe territories where but insignificant patches are suitable for agriculture, and all the remainder presents an expanse of salt marsh, probably doomed forever to remain the scene of Kirghiz nomad life.

The proper arable part of Siberia embraces at the present time four governments of the original Siberia, western and eastern, with the exception, however, of their northern regions, namely, in the government of Tobolsk, the Berezov and Surgut districts, and the northern halves of those of Tobolsk, Tourinsk and Tarsk; from Tomsk must be excluded the Narymsk country; from the government of the Yenisei, the Yeniseisk district; in Irkutsk the districts of Kirensk and Verkholensk. Besides this, almost the whole of Transbaikalia has a cultivable character, and the banks of the Amour and the Ussuri in the far east, although here as will be seen, cultivation exists rather in the future than in the present. Finally, in the steppe territories agriculture exists and is capable of development only in a few parts of the following districts: Kokchetavsk, Atbasarsk and Petropavlovsk in the Akmolinsk territory and in Semipalatinsk and Pavlodar in that of Semipalatinsk. Furthermore, are to be named the regions of artificial irrigation in the Zaisan district of the latter territory and in the foot-hill tracts of the territory of Semiretchensk.

Next, the whole north, namely, the above enumerated districts of the four governments of original Siberia, the whole Yakutsk territory, with the exception of the insignificant riverine zones, Kamchatka and the littoral of the Okhotsk Sea; all this consists of millions of square versts of tundras and wildwoods growing on a swampy soil. The Russian population is here confined to the officials of the local government, and to merchants and their agents, engaged in barter with the native nomads. The remaining population, the density of which moreover does not exceed three, and in the territory of Yakutsk even less than one inhabitant per square mile, consists of native Samoyeds, Ostiaks, Tunguz, Yakutsk, Kamchadals and others, who live exclusively by hunting and fishing. The produce of these industries partly serves for their own consumption, but mainly goes in barter for bread and other provisions furnished by the Russian traders. Between this northern, absolutely uncivilized portion of Siberia and its purely agricultural regions stretches as it were a zone of a transitional character. To it belong, in the government of Tobolsk, the southern half of the Turinsk and the central part of the Tobolsk district, as also

the northern volosts of the Tarsk district; in the government of Tomsk, the northern borderlands of the Tomsk and Marinsk districts; in Yeniseisk, part of the district of the same name; in Irkutsk, the Tunkinsk country and some other places. This transitional zone is characterized by the circumstance that agriculture there attains at last a more or less considerable development, while dividing its part as the main source of prosperity with several other industries. Along the rivers everywhere extend great reaches of lands suitable to cereals but their extent is insufficient to occupy the whole labour of the population and completely secure its well-being. At the same time the forests and waters open a wide field to the development of trapping and fishing, the cedar nut industry, the cutting of fuel and the felling of timber and a few household trades. In the population of this transitional zone the Russian peasants are mingled with more or less russified natives, and in the mode of life of both races no substantial difference can be observed.

Natives, in the main Buriats, still compose a considerable part of the population in those portions of the cultivated zone proper of Siberia lying further to the east, and whose settlement by Russians was accomplished comparatively recently. In the agricultural districts of the Irkutsk government the natives still form about 17 per cent, in the Thansbaikal territory, 30 per cent of the population; in the cultivated region of the governments of Yeniseisk and Tomsk the number of natives is already quite insignificant, while in the purely agricultural districts of the government of Tobolsk they are almost non-existent.

The chief characteristic feature of the cultivated tract of Siberia consists in the considerable dimensions attained by agriculture and in its predominating importance, as the fundamental source of the prosperity of the population. The average extent of the sown area per household of the rural population, including under this term peasants, natives and convicts, according to the latest statistical data, is as follows:

|                                                     |             |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| In the southern districts of the Tobolsk government | . . .       | 5.4 des.    |
| » » central part                                    | » » Tomsk   | » . . 5.8 » |
| » » agricultural region                             | » » Irkutsk | » . . 5.4 » |

and to every 100 souls of the actual population there is an area sown with grain, as below:

|                                                     |             |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| In the southern districts of the Tobolsk government | . . .       | 104 des.     |
| » » central part                                    | » » Tomsk   | » . . . 87 » |
| » » agricultural region                             | » » Irkutsk | » . . . 97 » |

The relation between the production and consumption of grain varies of course for every volost, and not unfrequently for an individual settlement, in dependence upon the quantity of lands suitable for grain growing and their conditions of soil. Taken as a whole, the agricultural region not only supports its population, but yields very considerable surpluses of grain. The sale of these surpluses is the chief source whence the population pays its taxes and satisfies its principal wants. According to the latest data the people of the agricultural districts of the Irkutsk government consume on an average crop not more than about 59 per cent of the grain raised; that of the north-eastern corner of the agricultural region of

the Tomsk government, about 66 per cent; 41 per cent in the first of the said localities, and 34 per cent in the second, form saleable surplus. And yet the regions in question are far from belonging to the number of the most fertile areas of agricultural Siberia. In such localities as the Altai mining district, the Minusinsk district of the Yeniseisk government, the best volosts of the south-western districts of the Tobolsk government, the proportion borne by the produce of grain to its consumption is yet considerably more favourable and the saleable surplus, on average harvests, forms not less than half of the whole yield. The export of grain, principally spring wheat from Western Siberia, reached in recent years 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 pouds annually. The total quantity therefore of grain raised in this part of Siberia forms not less than 85,000,000 pouds a year. It must not be forgotten, however, that in the pale of the agricultural tract of Siberia occur such patches where the land, on account of the bad conditions of soil and climate, cannot feed the population. But such spots are very small and their population exists upon the surplus grain of the nearest more fertile localities.

However this may be, the whole economical fate of the population of the cultivated zone of Siberia is entirely determined as a general rule by the condition of agriculture and of cattle-breeding so closely connected therewith. Where the land is good the population attains a high degree of wealth and grows alike by natural increase and by the tide of immigrant elements; when the land is poor, the population ordinarily lives in poverty and not unfrequently dwindles away in search of better places of settlement.

Trades and industries speaking in general terms, play the least considerable part in the economical life of the population of the agricultural tract of Siberia. But there are within the agricultural zone such regions also where agriculture loses its position as the sole source of prosperity and either shares it with other earnings or even altogether yields it to the latter. Thus, first of all may be pointed out many localities lying along the banks of great rivers where a very essential part in the economic life of the population is played by fishing, service on vessels and in the neighbourhood of fine forests, the raftage of timber. In localities nearly approaching uninhabited taigas and urmans great importance is possessed by hunting, the gathering of cedar nuts, and in the presence of a good market, the felling of timber. The volosts bordering on such great town centres as Tomsk, Tiumen, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk have the character usual for suburban regions. Agriculture is little developed in them or non-existent, and the population lives by market-gardening, dairy farming, the furnishing of hay and wood fuel, the letting in summer of villa residence, works in connexion with the cleansing of the streets and other similar occupations, directly serving to satisfy the wants of the town population. There are furthermore a few regions engaged in household industries. The largest of these surrounds the town Tiumen stretching therefrom to the north-west; the second is situated around the town of Tomsk; other such small industries occur in all the governments of the agricultural tract of Siberia. In all these regions articles of wood are principally manufactured, as also the results of wood distillation. These products are destined partly for the needs of the local true peasant population, partly to furnish the caravans moving over the great Siberian and other tracts. But the importance of all the enumerated non-agricultural earnings in the general economy of Siberia and in

particular in its agricultural zone is absolutely insignificant compared with the part which the great Siberian tract plays, and still more in former years. Formerly when yet there was no communication by steamer, this tract was the sole artery uniting European Russia with Siberia, and through it, with China. The traffic over the tract both summer and winter was enormous. The conveyance of travellers and goods, posts and prisoners, local officials and bodies of troops, absorbed almost the whole working power of the population along the tract. Comparatively few were engaged in agriculture along the tract and even they did not see in it their principal occupation. The mass of the population lived exclusively or almost exclusively by the trade of carriers or innkeepers. At the present time the importance of the tract is far from being what it was. The steamer communication on the Irtysh and Obi has almost completely killed the summer traffic upon the section of the tract between Tiumen and Tomsk, the steamer communication on the Chulym has absorbed a considerable part of the traffic between Tomsk and Achinsk. The tract here only wakes up in the winter, and even then the traffic now is much less than formerly, and is far from yielding the former profits to the tract population. The latter has therefore thrown itself into agriculture, the cultivated patches have everywhere been increased, and will be still further enlarged in future, and the population of the tract have already lost a considerable part of their former peculiar character.

Here the general description of the agricultural zone of Siberia may be closed. As far as concerns the outlying regions, mention has already been made of the territory of Yakutsk as a district absolutely uncultivable and inhabited by native trappers and fishermen. Here it may be permitted to indicate only the importance of the Lena tract, along which almost all the Russian population of the territory is gathered and which furnishes thereto its chief source of existence. The three steppe territories as already intimated contain cultivable oases where agriculture both exists and is capable of further development. Beyond these the whole expanse of these territories serves but as the wandering grounds of the Kirghiz, who live exclusively by the products of their cattle raising and do not promise at any near future date to pass over into the agricultural or industrial state. The attempts at such a passage to agriculture met with among the Kirghiz are as a rule quite isolated and devoid of any serious importance. Even the Kirghiz settled in separate households in the peasant colonies of the southern part of the Tobolsk government and who have not unfrequently accepted orthodoxy are also employed exclusively in cattle raising, the pasturing of cattle on land hired from the peasants, not seldom in horse-stealing; only the more wealthy among them sow oats, in order to feed their numerous horses. The only exception to this general characterization are the Kirghiz living in a part of the Zaisan district and upon the foothills of the Semirechensk territory, the so-called Kirghiz of the Great Horde and the Dikokamenny, whose life is woven of a very curious combination of nomad existence with very intensive irrigational agriculture. These Kirghiz too, like the others, have their places for winter and summer roaming, but from the latter they wander off several times in the course of the summer to their lands under tillage in order to water, plough and sow them, and to harvest the grain. On the arrival of the Russian population the Kirghiz not only taught them their own agricultural methods, but surrendered to them a considerable part of their irrigated lands, while

themselves transferring the centre of gravity of their economy to cattle raising. By doing so they lost nothing as the profitable sale opened to the produce of their cattle breeding, which appeared with the arrival of the Russians, fully compensated them for the contraction in the extent of their agriculture.

Passing at last the Amour border land, it appears that Amouria may be split up into three parts, the first of which is situated above the confluence of the Zeya with the Amour, the second below the confluence of the Bureya, the third between the lower reaches of these two streams. In the first tracts the only lands at present suitable for cultivation are those situated on the second terrace of the Amour valley, the first terrace is inundated several times every summer and therefore is unsuited to either settlement or agriculture. Outside this valley the region presents partly mountain ranges, partly tablelands scored with gullies and valleys, whose summits, thanks to the dense forest covering them, never dry up properly and therefore have to a considerable degree a swampy character. With the gradual felling and burning of the forest, the soil of the tablelands is slowly drying and becoming suitable for cultivation, so that in time the latter will undoubtedly take in a wider and yet wider tract. But this question is incapable of rapid settlement, and at any rate at the present time the whole mountainous part of the locality under consideration is absolutely desert and affords only an arena for the industry of the trappers of the Amour population. The main occupation of the latter is agriculture. Sowing on an average four to five dessiatines per household the local population on the whole secures its own provision but has no surplus grain for sale. The chief supplementary earnings are the carriage of goods and the furnishing of hay to the gold mines, fishing, trapping and the supply of wood fuel to the steamers. Upon section between the lower reaches of the Zeya and Bureya the zone adapted to cultivation is much wider, here not only is the second terrace of the Amour valley suited to agriculture, but also the watershed of the Zeya and Bureya, which has earned the name of the «prairie of the Amour». The population, partly Russian, partly Manchurian, is here much denser than in the rest of Amouria, the extent of the arable land much greater, and grain is produced not only for home consumption, but for sale. But in this district, as in the whole of Amouria, climatic conditions stand in the way of the development of cultivation; there is in effect an excess of moisture. The beyond measure damp and rainy climate has a sinister effect upon both the quality of the grain and upon the raising of live stock. The latter industry so far brings hardly any profit to the local population. For the development here of cultivation, there is wanted either a change in the climatic conditions, of which there is a hope in the future, or the elaboration of methods of agriculture and cattle raising more suitable to these conditions. Such a change in the climate was observed by the latest explorer of the country, the Academician Korzhinsky, as a result of the comparison of his own observations with the statements made by the academician Maximovich, who travelled in the Amour region thirty years earlier.

A still greater excess of moisture is met with in the most eastern borderland of Amouria and indeed of the whole of Siberia, namely in the Ussuri country. Here it is impossible to sow grain otherwise than in ridges leaving between them trenches for the drainage of the water and the free movement of the air. The development of cultivation is

here still less possible than in the rest of Amouria otherwise than after a preliminary drainage of the country, or by the adoption of some other measures for combatting the excess of moisture.

With this may be closed the general economical appreciation of those regions into which Siberia falls according to the degree of development of the practice of agriculture, and the transition may now be made to the survey of the separate sources of prosperity of the population of Siberia. In consequence of the predominating importance of agriculture for the main mass of this population the largest share of attention must be devoted to its description.

The fashion and character of agricultural production are determined, on the one hand, by the denseness of the population, the conditions of sale and other similar economical questions, and on the other, by the natural and physical conditions, mainly those dependent on soil and climate. The density of the population and the climate have been discussed in the preceding descriptions. The discussion of the conditions of sale and of the general economical situation will appear below. Here then it is necessary to give a general characterization of the Siberian soils. Unfortunately, the data existing upon this subject are far from complete. An exact scientific exploration of the soils, accompanied by chemical analyses, has hitherto been carried on only in two limited regions, in one district of the government of Irkutsk and in the Barabinsk steppe in the Tomsk government. Further descriptions of the soil exist in reference to a few districts of the Tobolsk and Tomsk governments and to the Amour country. These are founded upon mere surveys, connected with measurements of the depth of the soil and in a few cases only with the determination of samples of it, based upon a superficial inspection, more rarely by means of the method of subsidence, the determination of the humus contained, and other more exact methods. In reference to many localities there exist no published indications whatever upon the conditions of the soil. It may thus be said that the soil of Siberia still awaits a serious investigation. A great step will be made in this direction in the near future when fruit shall be borne by the expedition now projected by the Ministry of State Domains, having for its object the exploration of the conditions of the soil of the whole expanse of Siberia, traversed by the line of the Great Siberian Railway. Till then it is only possible to present the most general sketch of these conditions, only a superficial characterization is possible, far from satisfying the demands of a strict scientific description.

The greatest variety and at the same time the fullest account are met with in the case of the soil conditions of the government of Tobolsk. That portion of the latter possessing agriculture may, in respect to the situation of its arable lands and of the conditions of the soil, be divided into three zones, the northern, lying approximately between the parallels  $58^{\circ}$  and  $59^{\circ}$  and embracing the northern parts of the districts of the Turinsk and Tobolsk; the middle zone, lying between  $56^{\circ}$  and  $58\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ , and including the southern halves of the above named districts, the whole Tiumen district and the northern parts of those of Tarsk, Ishimsk and Yalutorovsk; and the southern, taking in the southern portions of the last named three districts, the whole of Kurgansk and Tiukalinsk, and the strip of the Akmolinsk territory adjacent to the frontier of the government of Tobolsk.

The northernmost of the zones just described is a region where agriculture exists but sporadically. It consists of unbroken urmans or expanses of forest and swamp, for the most part wholly unsuited to tillage and brought under the plough only in narrow strips, on the margins of the larger rivers and owing their conversion to a condition fit for cultivation to their influence on the drainage. The arable lands are disposed partly on portions of the river valleys comparatively elevated, and so not subject to being drowned by the ordinary overflow of the rivers; partly on the inclined banks called *uvals*, uniting the bottom of the valley with the flat interriverine space; and partly in places where the valley is not bounded by gently sloping sides but by abrupt precipices or *yars*; in such cases the narrow strips of the plateau bordering these *yars* are cultivated, behind which again commence the untilled expanses of the swampy urman. As regards the soils, in the fields belonging to the first group prevail very sticky clayey soils, partly gray, slightly tinged with humus, partly black, containing from 10 to 15 per cent of this substance. The black soils present two varieties; the first is an argillaceous chernoziom upon the localities with a raised contour, the most fertile of all the soils met with in the given region. The second shows black earth upon the spots, which are depressed and suffer from an excess of moisture; it is a very poor and barren soil of a peaty character unable even to yield satisfactory crops of winter rye and only adapted to sowing oats. Upon the sloping valley sides, or *uvals*, soils of a more friable nature predominate, although for the most part of a clayey character, fairly rich in humus and stained dark brown, upon a reddish-yellow clayey subsoil. These soils together with the clayey chernoziom of the river valleys are reputed to be the best. Uval fields are valued the more that owing to their situation they are better secured than the others from unfavourable atmospheric influences. Finally the lands tilled along the *yars* on the skirts of the interriverine plateaux have a soil very poor in humus and capable of yielding harvests only by the liberal application of manure. They are partly crumbly sandy tracts in the regions nearest to the Ural with an appreciable admixture of small stones or *galkas*, partly sour clayey soils of the type prevailing in the localities lying further to the south.

The whole central zone of the Tobolsk government presents a perfectly flat plain intersected more or less by wide valleys belonging to different rivers and streams. Like the northern zone, it has for the most part a forest character. But in contradistinction to the northern zone, forests of deciduous trees, principally birch predominate instead of conifers. Moreover, the morasses although very extensive yet here occupy much less of the total area than in the northern zone. Hence it is that in the localities situated in the middle zone not only are the river valleys suited for agricultural operations together with the bordering lands, but more or less considerable portions also of the interriverine plateaux. The lands suitable for raising grain are here at times spread over more or less extensive tracts, at others in small patches between woody or swampy lands unfitted for cultivation. The soil conditions of these forest fields are very monotonous, they are almost exclusively so-called *bieliks*, characterised by a very thin layer of turf, a *vershok* or *vershok* and a half thick, under which lies a stratum five or six *vershoks* thick of almost unproductive, light-gray, sour, clayey soil, superimposed upon a reddish yellow clay. These *bieliks* fairly useful to the farmer when manured, without it are very illsuited to agriculture on account of their properties



and are very stingy. Cereals only derive nourishment from the superior turf layer, and when the latter becomes exhausted, which ensues after three or four crops, it is necessary to abandon the field for twenty to twenty-five and more years, until a new turf layer is formed. It is clear under these circumstances why agriculture upon soils of this kind is only capable of a feeble development. It is concentrated in the whole of the central zone along the rivers where the conditions of soil are much more favourable. It is principally the sloping uvals near the rivers that are brought under the plough; these extend in some instances along both banks, in others along one only, attaining in the case of more considerable rivers a breadth of several versts with a height above the valley of thirty to forty sagesen. The soil conditions of the uval lands show little variation; is everywhere a dark brown and clayey, pretty friable, not seldom with an admixture of large grains of quartz visible to the eye; the subsoil is reddish yellow clay. The thickness of the workable layer varies ordinarily from five to eight vershoks. The soil is the richer in vegetable mould and therefore more fertile, the greater the depth of the tillable layer. Above the uvals on the tracts of the interriverine plateau bordering on the same, the soil frequently passes into a black friable form of great thickness, 10 to 12 vershoks and more, and rich in humus, as much as 15 to 17 per cent but of little fertility, possessing an undoubted peaty character. Little ploughing is done within the river valleys, for the most part presenting meadows subject to inundation or so narrow that they leave no room for agricultural operations. Where however the valleys are tilled, tenaceous clayey soils prevail of the same types as were described in speaking of the soils of the northern zone.

But the greatest interest and the greatest variety are afforded by the soil conditions of the southern zone of the government of Tobolsk, which enters into the composition of the so-called Ishimsk steppe. The contour of this steppe is remarkable in the highest degree. On the whole absolutely level, it is scattered over with a number of lakes, between which extend small elevations, ridges or islands. Always long and narrow in horizontal section, their length sometimes reaches many versts, while their breadth at the level of the horizon is measured by hundreds of sagesen and never exceeds a verst, they always trend in the direction of their long axis from W.S.W. to E.N.E. and are not more than three to four sagesen in height. They have extremely sloping sides and are distinguished by the predominance of dark brown, friable clayey soils with a heavy admixture of white sand, upon a reddish clay subsoil. In appearance closely resembling the uval soils of the middle zone, the soils upon the islands of the Ishimsk steppe, characterized by the thriving upon them in the unploughed state of the wild cherry, are much more fertile and are particularly adapted to the raising of wheat, with which they are accordingly chiefly sown. As for the flat spaces lying between the islands, they are partly naked salt marsh, absolutely stripped of all vegetation or clothed with a typical flora such as *salsola* et cetera, partly feather-grass steppe over which are scattered, in scarcely perceptible hollows, spinnies of birch and aspen called «k o l k a s». The soil conditions of the two classes are absolutely different. Upon the open steppe the soil is so-called *podsolonok*, that is, dark grey, very tenacious clay, covered with a thin layer of turf. In the kolkas, it is black, very deep, but at the same time very barren, with a decided peaty character.

Both the general appearance and the soil conditions of the Ishimsk steppe change a little on moving from the west to the east. Upon its western border in the Kurgansk district and the south-western part of that of Ishimsk, the islands are small, but very thickly set, so that they occupy the greater part of the expanse, and communicate to the latter a rolling character. The soil upon the islands is very darkly stained and the wild cherry, the sign of its excellent quality, is evrywhere to be met with. Further to the east, in the south-eastern corner of the Ishimsk district and in that of Tiukalinsk, the cherry vanishes, the soil on the islands has on the whole a paler tinge and is much less fertile. The islands themselves, each by itself much longer, are scattered over the steppe somewhat thinly, so that the latter here assumes rather a flat than a rolling character.

A contour very similar to that of the Ishimsk steppe is possessed by the Barabinsk steppe lying to the east of it, embracing in the Tobolsk government the eastern half of the Tiukalinsk district and in that of Tomsk, the south-western half of the Kainsk district. Here also the horizontal surface of the steppe is sprinkled on the one hand with lakes and on the other with oblong elevations, ridges or islands. Here as in the Ishimsk steppe, the dependence between the contour and the soil is so close that, as one of the latest explorers remarks, «knowing the contour of this or that site, it is easy to determine the soil itself, lying there». Upon the broad and sloping ridges chernoziom is everywhere deposited; upon the narrow and more abrupt ridges, a clayey soil. Some broad ridges possess sloping northern and more precipitous southern sides. In such cases chernoziom is to be found on the northern incline and clayey soil on the southern. As for the flat space between the ridges the more low lying plots are composed of saltmarsh, partly white or covered with a saline efflorescence and deprived of all vegetation, partly black, covered with a herbaceous growth but equally unsuited to the raising of grain. Upon the more elevated parts, lying nearest to the foot of the ridges, the soil is *podsolonok* of the same type as in the Ishimsk steppe and adapted to the cultivation of cereals.

In respect to the fertility of its arable lands the Barabinsk steppe is placed in the same conditions as the eastern Ishimsk borderland, and in worse than the western part of the latter. In the Barabinsk steppe, as in the eastern part of the Ishimsk steppe, the wild cherry, characteristic of the best wheat lands of the western part of the Ishimsk steppe, does not occur. Within the Barabinsk steppe itself the general level of fertility is not without variation. Least fertile is the northern borderland of Barabinsk, where the steppe gradually passes over into an expanse of urman and swamp. Most fertile is the southern borderland, embracing a part of the Barnaul and Bisk districts and reaching to the foothills of the Altai.

From the eastern frontier of the Barabinsk steppe right up to lake Baikal, including the eastern districts of the Tomsk government and the whole cultivated portion of those of Yeniseisk and Irkutsk, stretches a tract showing great uniformity both in its general character and in its soil conditions. A certain peculiarity is presented only by the southern borderlands of the Yeniseisk and Irkutsk governments, especially the Minusinsk district, which possess a steppe character, with a predominance of chernoziom soils of good quality, yielding excellent harvests of wheat. The whole remaining space has the appearance of what may be called the central Siberian *polesie* or forest region.

On the south, the whole of central Siberia is bordered as is known by lofty mountain ranges, the Altai, Alatau and Sayan. But the mountain systems of these ranges fill up a locality, almost uninhabitable and in no way belonging to the composition of the cultivated zone of Siberia. Only here and there the last offshoots of the mountains having the form of small hills enter into the limits of this zone. Further the whole cultivated part of the central Siberian polesie presents, speaking generally, a typical flat elevation, and the considerable inequalities to be found upon its surface proceeded almost exclusively from the fact that the rivers have washed out in it more or less deep valleys. Where the rivers are well filled and their beds situated near to each other, there the general plain character of the locality is completely masked. Flat expanses are hardly to be seen, the whole contour is composed of the uvals bordering the river valleys, and the locality produces the impression of a hilly district, where the interriverine watersheds seem to be as it were low mountain ranges. Where the rivers are less close together and not so full, the flat character of the locality shows itself quite manifestly, and the narrow river valleys occupy only an insignificant part of the space compared with the flat watersheds. As will immediately appear, such a flat contour, on account of the soil conditions connected therewith, is much less favourable to the successful development of agriculture, than a more rolling contour.

As far as regards soil, a characteristic feature of the central Siberian forest region, at any rate of its cultivated portion, (in the taiga, tenacious gray clayey soils prevail) is the predominance of chernoziom, and in general, dark-coloured soil. At the same time, in distinction to the soils of the Tobolsk government rich in humus, the chernozioms of this locality do not possess a brownish tinge but are dyed a perfect black. As in the localities, described earlier, the character of the soil is here also in the closest dependence upon the contour. The high-quality soils with a dry land flora are situated exclusively upon spots with a high relief, affording a free drainage to the water, and consequently mainly on the uvals bordering the river valleys. Where the uvals are more gently sloping, the soil is deeper (from 6 to 8 vershoks) and richer in humus, (10 to 12 per cent). It has a perfectly black colour and while preserving its clayey character, is yet fairly friable. Both in respect to its physical qualities and the degree of abundance of nutritious substances, this soil is very favourable for the cultivation of grain and especially for rye. Where the uvals are more abrupt, the percentage of humus is less (from 5 to 6 per cent), the thickness of the soil does not exceed 4 to 6 vershoks, its colour instead of black becomes gray, the soil itself is much more tenacious, and its productiveness perceptibly lower than that of the black soils, earlier characterized. As for the flat interriverine plateaux, there black soils with a vegetable character prevail. More often tenacious, muddy, clayey soils are met with, more rarely friable soils composed of humus and peat. Notwithstanding the considerable depth (12 to 16 vershoks and more) and the richness in humus (15 to 17 per cent), the soils of both types are little adapted to the cultivation of grain. Not to speak of wheat, even rye grows badly on them, so that the lands with a vegetable soil are principally sown with oats.

It is now clear why the rolling contour of the locality in the central Siberian forest region is more suited to raising grain than the flat relief. Where slopes prevail, there black and grey soils of good quality predominate, so that in localities ploughed up in all directions by

rivers and streams, nearly the whole ground is not seldom occupied with arable land with good chernoziom soil. Where flat plateaux prevail, there soils of good quality occupy but narrow strips, bounding the banks of rivers, and there predominate partly wet lands unsuited to agriculture, partly arable lands with a bad soil, of a swampy and vegetable nature.

With this the sketch of the soil conditions of the agricultural zone of primitive Siberia may be terminated. In conclusion it is necessary to say still a few words on the soil conditions of one of the borderlands of Siberia, in reference to which more precise information exists, namely Amouria.

The three sections into which Amouria was divided above are sharply distinguished in reference to soil. Above the mouth of the Zeya and below that of the Bureya prevail dark brown, clayey soils lying on stony fundamental rocks, in some places covered with a thin turfy layer of humus, in others entirely free from a tinge of mould. In the inundated meadows of the Amour the clayey soils yield place to coarse-grained, sandy, much less fertile soils, and in the thick woods, to a sour soil with a pale gray tint in the upper layer, and a whitish in the lower. Over the expanse included between the valleys of the Zeya and Bureya the whole area as stated by Professor Korzhinsky «is composed of sandy clays fairly tenacious in the upper levels. They are covered with a layer of dark mould, having a depth of 4 to 6 vershoks on the sloping uvals, and one and a half arshines on the bottoms». Upon dry elevated places this soil in its physical properties and structure recalls the Russian chernoziom; in the lower places it is manifestly of a half-swampy origin, recalling in all respects the black vegetable soils of Western Siberia and neither in its origin nor significance in farming having anything in common with true chernoziom.

With the extraordinary variety of climatic and soil conditions and population sketched in the preceding pages, it is impossible to look for any uniformity in the methods of farming employed in Siberia and especially in the system of field culture. And in fact the systems and types of field culture and the rotations of crops are very varied.

In those of the Siberian governments which comprise the mass of the agricultural population and lands suitable for farming operations, Tobolsk, Tomsk, Yeniseisk and Irkutsk the Transbaikal territory and the cultivated portions of the Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk, a peculiar system of agriculture prevails which is absolutely unknown in European Russia. It bears the name of the resting and fallow system. Agriculture is in this case founded exclusively upon the exploitation of the productive forces of the land, unsupported by any manuring, and renewed by the combination of two means, the abandoning of the land to waste, and the rotation of crops with fallow. The land, whether cleared from forest or ploughed up in the open steppe, is sown two or three years consecutively with grain, and then left a year in fallow. It is then sown one or two years with grain and then again goes under fallow. Such a rotation is continued until the severe falling off in yield and the choking with weeds compel the land to be abandoned to rest, and a new patch to be broken up. The land is allowed to rest until definite signs, which are well known to the peasants, show that its productiveness has been sufficiently renewed. Then it is again ploughed up and the same process is gone through from the very beginning. At the same time it may be said, as a general rule, that in the beginning of the period of cultivation and on the fallows more

exhausting grains are sown, such as wheat, winter and spring rye; towards the end of the period, and upon the stubble fields, such grains as barley and oats. Moreover, at the beginning of the period of tillage the land is more seldom left fallow; at the end, more often; thus, at first after every two crops, at last after every single crop harvested. Finally, the duration itself of the periods of tillage for freshly broken lands, that is, such as have never been under cultivation, is in general longer than for lands which have been ploughed before and again broken up after a prolonged rest, as such rest seldom completely renews the fertility of the soil.

Such is the general character of the rest and fallow system. As for its varieties, they are extremely numerous. Siberian farming is distinguished by the absence of all pedantry. Not only every volost or commune, but each farmer independently determines the rotation of crops for every patch of land which he is using, adapting himself to its soil and situation, to the climate and conditions of the market, finally, to his personal means. The number of crops taken from the land during the period of tillage fluctuates between 3 and 4, for poor sour lands, and 25 to 30 for the best chernoziom, and there even exist lands, especially in the southern part of the Tobolsk government, which have been under the plough more than 100 years and have never yet been left to rest. The duration of the period of rest varies between 5 and 10, and 25 and 30 years, depending on the one hand, upon the soil conditions, and on the other, upon the degree of exhaustion to which the land has been brought by previous sowings. In some places and on some lands, sowing on the stubble field is a normal occurrence, so that the rotation of crops approaches the rest-three-field type; in other places and upon other lands such sowings form an exception, or are not carried out at all; the land is fallowed after each crop and the rotation approximates to the rest-two-field type, and so on. As to the predominating sorts, in each locality the more exacting grains are to be found on the best lands, and the coarser kinds on the worst. But however this may be, whole districts are characterized by the prevalence now of one, now of another kind of grain. Thus upon the splendid sandy chernoziom of the steppes of the south-western part of the Tobolsk government, and of the agricultural localities of the Akmolinsk territory, as also in the Altai mining district and the southern part of the Yenisei government, wheat predominates, in some places occupying as much as half of the whole area sown, and more. In the central agricultural part of the Tobolsk government, distinguished by the prevalence of sourish soils, the crops are mainly barley and spring rye. Over the whole expanse from Tomsk to Irkutsk the forests and friable chernoziom soils favour winter rye, which only yields place to spring rye in the places stripped of forest. Along the whole line of the Siberian tract the largest areas are sown with oats, which here have a certain and profitable sale. Besides the cereals enumerated, there are further sown here and there, millet, huckwheat, peas and potatoes, while of the industrial plants flax is almost universally sown, hemp in the chernoziom localities, and sunflower in the Altai.

The system of agriculture prevalent in Siberia exhibits the greatest variety not only in space, but in time. With the growing density of the population and the contraction of the land space, the periods of rest of the land are gradually reduced, and the periods of tillage increased. The rapidly progressive exhaustion of the land, resulting from this, it is attempted

to arrest by more frequent fallow, the rest-three field rotation is gradually abandoned for a rest-two-field. At the same time the exhaustion of the land makes it ever less capable of yielding satisfactory harvests of the more valuable grains and compels their replacement by coarser kinds. Wheat and, where the forest has been most cut, winter rye, are expelled by spring rye; the latter, by barley. At the same time the lowering of the crops gradually brings the population to the conviction of the impossibility, under the changed conditions, of carrying on farming in the old way and of the necessity of passing to new methods, namely with the use of manure. Part of the population however does not wish to reconcile itself to this necessity and prefers to leave for new places, where there is still plenty of land and where its freshness permits farming by the customary rest method. The other part, the majority, remains and continues in spite of everything to carry on the old methods. Finally, the more energetic minority begins by degrees to pass over to the manuring system. As first individual faint-hearted and frequently unsuccessful attempts at manuring the land find more and more imitators, and little by little agriculture with manure from being a rare exception becomes the general rule.

Some localities of Siberia, in the main, the northern borderland of the agricultural zone of the Tobolsk government, that is, the Turinsk district and the middle of the Tobolsk district, have already passed through that critical period. In these localities, in some places as regards all the lands under the plough, in others as regards only those nearest to the farmsteads, this system has become firmly established. It is precisely of the form of the three-field system as it has long existed in the central governments of European Russia, that is, with a predominance of rye in the winter field, oats and barley in the spring, and with green fallow. As for the manuring, the extent to which it is carried is very different, in dependence on the relation of the quantity of meadow land to that of the land under crops. In the comparatively southern localities, where there is a fairly large amount of arable land, and few meadows, a part of the fallow field, equivalent to  $\frac{1}{6}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$ , is manured. Further to the north where there is very little arable land, and much meadow land, the whole fallow field is manured, and as a consequence in spite of the comparatively unfavourable natural conditions, larger and, what is particularly important, more constant crops are obtained than anywhere in Siberia. Finally, still further to the north near the 60th parallel, at the very northernmost limit of agriculture, even a heavy application of manure does not make it possible to carry on the three-field system. Here two fields are used, with winter rye predominating on the best lands, and barley on the rest. With heavy manuring agriculture even here yields excellent results, but is incapable of attaining any considerable development, in consequence of the extremely limited supply of lands suitable for sowing grain.

The cultivation of the arable lands in Siberia is on the whole very satisfactory, far better than on the peasant farms in central Russia. Such a superiority of the Siberian peasant farming is determined mainly by the abundance there of working cattle, possible on account of the wealth of the country in hayland and pasture, and secondly of the comparatively good construction of the agricultural implements.

The implements used in Siberia for ploughing, to wit, ploughs, here bear various names, *kolesianka*, *saban*, *rogaliukha*, et cetera; but their fundamental construction is

everywhere the same. They consist of a broad triangular ploughshare (more often made in two parts) whose left angle is bent forward and plays the part of the web, a wooden mould-board, a lifting screw or a system of wedges regulating the depth of ploughing. The work of this plough has no resemblance to that of the Great Russia plough (*sokha*) but is very like that of the plug. The depth ploughed may be carried to four and even six *vershoks*, the breadth of the clod being also six *vershoks*. The latter is cut off very cleanly and a field ploughed by a Siberian *sokha* hardly differs in appearance from one ploughed by a plug. In the regions where agriculture is most developed the *sokha* is fastened to a two-wheeled carriage and furnished with two or three horses. In localities lying near to the northern limit of agriculture, the shafts are fastened directly to the mouldboard and the plough is harnessed to one horse. The harrows used in Siberia belong to the half-heavy type. They consist of a wooden frame with iron teeth, in number from 16 to 20. In the purely agricultural zone of Siberia, the average farmer harrows with three harrows, while the rich farmers send one after another up to six. In the north, where the strips are not large, usually one harrow is used, but they here have very many more teeth. The other implements, sickles, scythes, both simple and with fingers (*cradles*), flails for thrashing, shovels for winnowing, present no differences from those employed in European Russia. Until lately there were no machines in Siberia. Recently small hand winnowers of the Grant system have been largely adopted in the Altai and in localities lying to the east of Tomsk, and horse thrashing-machines have begun to appear among the rich peasants.

The chief object that the Siberian peasant places before himself in preparing the land for sowing is the struggle with weeds, which with the freshness of the soils and their richness in organic substances grow up in great abundance and are one of the worst enemies of grain crops. Another problem, the bringing of the soil into the requisite condition of friableness, in the mind of the Siberian peasant, yields to that of destroying the weeds. The degree of their abundance mainly determines in each case the greater or less extent of ploughing and harrowing, the time for these processes and for sowing and a mass of other less essential details.

The normal type of the cultivation of fallow in Siberia is twice ploughing, with harrowing after the first. All these operations are carried out in the interval of time between the beginning of June and the end of July. An additional third ploughing is added in the case of many weeds or heavy soil, especially if the later has been washed with snow water and threatens to become covered with an impenetrable hard crust. Upon such heavy, clay soils the third ploughing of the fallow is effected in spring, upon friable soils in late autumn. Stubble fields are ploughed once only, usually in spring, and only rarely on very crumbly soils in autumn. Before ploughing the remaining stubble is burnt and the ash serves in some sort as a manure. The sowing of winter grain begins from the very last days of July and where possible is concluded in the middle of August, although in the case of poor men it not seldom drags on to the beginning of September. The spring grains in the southern localities of agricultural Siberia are begun to be sown at the end of April, in the northern regions, in the beginning of May, wheat being sown earliest of all, and latest oats and especially barley. The time of sowing has on account of the Siberian climatic conditions a very

great importance. With too early sowing the grain suffers from spring frosts; with too late, from weeds and autumn hoar frosts. A day's difference in the time of sowing often determines a good or a bad harvest.

The field once sown is not attended to any more. Only young spring crops, in the main wheat and spring rye, have to be very frequently weeded, as often neither ploughing nor harrowing are capable of stopping the growth of weeds. The harvesting of winter grain begins ordinarily at the end of July; of spring, at the beginning of August. The harvesting of all grains is concluded under ordinary circumstances at the beginning of September, but when the weather is unfavourable, is frequently delayed much later, sometimes to the beginning of October. The grain, cut with sickle or scythe, after drying is gathered into heaps on the field and on the arrival of winter is carried on sledges into the farmsteads or to the *zaimkas*. It is then kiln-dried in out-houses or barns, thrashed and winnowed. Next the grain intended for sowing is subjected to a final cleansing by means of special instruments, so-called *podsievs*, cylinders turning about a horizontal axis, made of sheet iron with holes of various sizes. That which is intended for food or sale is subjected to no further treatment.

It is impossible to give any data on the cost of production of grain, in consequence of the considerable variety in the level and the violent fluctuations in wages, which should apply to the whole of Siberia or even to its agricultural region only. The cost of separate operations and of the whole together, in the production of grain whether per *dessiatine* or per *poud* in different localities presents very wide variations. The figures below, showing the cost in some parts of agricultural Siberia of the more important operations in the raising of grain, may give some idea thereof.

| Per <i>dessiatine</i> .         | Southern part of Tobolsk. |                   | Central Tomsk. | Agricultural parts of Irkutsk. |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
|                                 | Best localities.          | Worst localities. |                |                                |
|                                 | R o u b l e s .           |                   |                |                                |
| Ploughing (once) . . . . .      | 2.00                      | 1.25              | 2.00           | 2.00                           |
| Harrowing » . . . . .           | 1.20                      | 0.75              | 1.00           | 1.00                           |
| Reaping } average crop. . . . . | 7.50                      | 3.75              | 7.00           | 6 to 10                        |
| Thrashing } . . . . .           | 4.50                      | 2.00              | 4.00           | 4.00                           |

The entire cost of the cultivation of a *dessiatine* of land together with the harvesting of the crop and the cleansing of the grain is expressed for the same localities by the following figures:

|                         |                              | Fallow.         | Stubble.        |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Best localities         | } southern Tobolsk . . . . . | 23 — 27 roubles | 14 — 18 roubles |
| Worst »                 |                              | 15 — 20 »       | 8 — 9 »         |
| Central Tomsk . . . . . |                              | 22 — 27 »       | 13 — 15 »       |
| Irkutsk . . . . .       |                              | 25 — 27 »       | 14 »            |



Thus 22 to 25 roubles per dessiatine for spring grain, sown on fallow, and 12 to 15 roubles per dessiatine on stuhhle field, are the approximate standards, around which the entire cost of the production of grain in agricultural Siheria fluctuates, and in particular in such parts of it where farming is carried on according to the rest-fallow system. In those localities of the To-holsk government, where the passage has already been effected to farming with manure and a necessary three-field or two-field rotation of crops, the total cost of the operations per dessiatine is as follows:

|                                                    |                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Three-field region with manuring of part of fallow | 32 to 34 roubles | } 2 grain crops in<br>rotation. |
| » » » » » » whole » »                              | 43 »             |                                 |
| » » » . . . . .                                    | : 19 to 20 »     |                                 |

Before passing to the question of the yield, it is necessary to say a few words on the thickness of sowing. Here, as in what has preceded, it is impossible to cite any figures having an application to the whole of Siheria. The thickness of sowing per dessiatine in different localities varies as follows:

|                                |               |             |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| For winter rye between . . . . | 6—7 and 14—16 | chetveriks. |
| » spring » » . . . .           | 5—7 » 11—12   | »           |
| » » wheat » . . . .            | 6—8 » 14—16   | »           |
| » oats » » . . . .             | 12—16 » 23—32 | »           |
| » harley » » . . . .           | 8—12 » 20—24  | »           |

But the lowest of these figures now are very rarely met with, namely only upon freshly cleared, very fertile lands. The highest refer exclusively to the northern horder land of agriculture, to localities with two-field farming, and also three-field with manuring of the whole of the fallow. In the case of the region of greatest development of agriculture the limits of variation are much narrower. The amount sown per dessiatine is ordinarily:

|                                  |              |             |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Rye, winter and spring . . . . . | from 8 to 10 | chetveriks. |
| Wheat. . . . .                   | » 10 » 12    | »           |
| Barley. . . . .                  | » 12 » 14    | »           |
| Oats. . . . .                    | » 16 » 20    | »           |

The sowing is the thinner the more southern the locality; the better and fresher the soil, the earlier the given land is sown; it is, on the contrary, the thicker, the further to the north, the more the land is exhausted and the poorer in organic matter. A mistake in the thickness of the sowing threatens the farmer with very lamentable consequences. If the sowing has been carried out too thinly, the young plants are threatened with danger from weeds; if too thickly, with a rich soil and moist weather, the grain may easily over tiller and the ears fill badly.

The extremely treacherous nature of the harvests, their violent fluctuations from very high figures to zero, form an important and characteristic feature of Siherian agricultural economy. An exception is only formed by the localities lying near the northern limit of agriculture, those localities where the transition has already been accomplished to manuring and the three or two-field system. Thanks to the influence of manure and the treading of the fallow

field by cattle, and also to the favourable natural conditions, the absence of droughts and hailstorms et cetera, complete crop failures here hardly ever occur, and in general very bad harvests are rare. Not often rising very high, the harvests ordinarily keep near the average standard, which is here very fair. In localities where part of the fallow field is manured the average yield of rye fluctuates between 70 and 80 pounds per dessiatine, only on the very worst fields falling to 60 pounds. The yields for oats and barley vary within about the same limits. Further to the north where the whole fallow field is manured, rye gives on an average 80, oats and barley, from 90 to 100 pounds per dessiatine. On the region of two-field farming the yields of rye also fluctuate from 70 to 80 pounds, but spring crops give considerably more. Oats give on an average 110 to 120, barley 100 or 110 pounds per dessiatine. Thanks to such high yields the population of some localities of the Toholsk government, lying near the very northernmost limit of husbandry, lives notwithstanding the insignificant extent of the arable land, on its own grain.

Very different is the case in localities where the rest-system still prevails. The average figures of the productivity are here also fairly, and in some places, very satisfactory. Thus, the average figures of the harvests for wheat fluctuate in the above indicated wheat regions between 60 and 80 pounds, and only where wheat reaches its extreme northern limits, or encounters unfavourable conditions of soil, fall to 50, 40 pounds and lower. Winter rye in localities abounding in forest and having suitable soils, gives on an average also from 60 to 80, sometimes even as much as 90 pounds per dessiatine, and only on the very worst soils does the average yield sink from 40 to 50 pounds. Such are also the limits of fluctuation and the average figure for the yield of spring rye in the localities where it is most grown. As for oats, two figures representing the average yield must be noted: when sown on fallow, and when sown on stubble fields. In the first case oats, even upon comparatively bad lands, yield on an average not less than 80 to 100 pounds per dessiatine. When the sowing is on stubble, even the best lands do not reach this average standard, while bad lands yield not more than 40 to 50 pounds per dessiatine. Finally, barley in the region of the rest-system of farming is only sown on bad and exhausted lands, where it gives better crops than any other breadstuff. Where rye either does not grow at all, or yields some 30 to 40 pounds per dessiatine, barley with an average harvest gives 50 to 60 pounds.

But the figures quoted are far from affording material for drawing true conclusions in reference to the economical position of the Siberian agriculturist. The extremely violent and wide fluctuations deprive these averages of almost all significance. The upper limits of these fluctuations are very high, 180, 200, 240 pounds of wheat, 180 to 200 pounds of rye, 200 to 250 pounds of barley, 250 to 350 pounds of oats per dessiatine; such yields without irrigation or manuring have excited the wonder of travellers and created for Siberia the reputation of a country of fabulous fertility. But such harvests occur once in several dozen years, and then only upon the lands which are best in respect to conditions of climate and freshness. Of course, a much less yield, 100 or 120 pounds of wheat or rye, 150 to 180 pounds of oats, and so on is sufficient to enrich the agriculturist. Such harvests formerly happened pretty often, and it was they that created the prosperity of the Siberian peasant farmer. During the last decades there have been not seldom more or less complete crop failures.

This is, he it remembered, true only as regards spring crops. The yields of winter rye in places suited to it never fall to zero; a complete failure only occurs on separate strips, and therefore had harvests in the forest rye region, lying to the east of Tomsk, never place the population in such a difficult position, as in the region of spring crops, and particularly in the wheat steppes. Here occur complete failures, and very had harvests not unfrequently follow each other three and four years running.

The chief causes of the failure of the crops in these steppe localities are drought and the *kobyłka*, an insect belonging to the order of orthoptera, similar to the locust and applied to several species of grasshopper. In forest localities these causes yield place to the baneful consequences of unfavourable winters, which react destructively upon the winter crops, but these circumstances never here attain such a character as the droughts in the steppe localities. Not less essential causes of crop failures, operating equally in the forests and steppes, are the spring frosts and autumn hoar frosts, of which the former damage the sprouting grain the latter injure it when filling. According to the soil, situation and time of sowing, the hoar frosts and frosts sometimes destroy the grain without leaving anything, sometimes destroy or spoil only part of the crop. The influence of frosts is different in different localities. In some they injure the crops once in several years, in others, much more frequently. There are even spots, as to the north-east of Tomsk, where the spring crops freeze every year. Oats in such places are sown for straw and feed; the seeds are always brought from without. Further mention must be made of the fogs and especially of the appearance of microscopic fungi, such as smut and ergot. At times, continuous rains prevent the grain from ripening and hinder harvest operations; at others hail, laying the crop, are the cause of failure.

It is stated above that in localities forming part of the zone where the rest-system is practised agriculture is, if not the only at any rate, an essential source of the people's prosperity, and the sale of the surplus produce, the principal source of its money income. Such grain surplus finds a market in different directions. The wheat from the Altai, the steppe regions, and the southern part of the Toholsk government, goes partly in a raw state, partly in meal, to the west, namely to European Russia. Nearly the whole of the surplus of oats is consumed by the great Siberian tract. The same traffic over the tract swallows up a considerable part of the grain produced in its neighbourhood. Lastly a large part of the grain surplus of the agricultural region contributes to the food supply of the population of the non-agricultural borderlands of Siberia, or is hought up by the gold mines for the needs of their miners. There still remains a large quantity which goes to the distilleries to be converted into spirits. All these outlets for the grain produce, in spite of their apparent variety, have one common feature, namely they all absorb the surplus from good harvests and do not return it when there is a crop failure.

Siberia does not yet possess a properly organized local grain trade, capable of equalizing surplus and deficit according to good and bad seasons, and regularizing the prices of grain. Neither does there exist such a regulator of the fluctuations in harvests and prices according to locality. In consequence of the immensity of the distances in Siberia and the insufficiency of the ways of communication grain, grown in abundance for example, in the Yenisei and even Tomsk governments, cannot supply the deficit

in that of Tobolsk. The cost of carriage would be too great, and accordingly extreme want may be experienced in one government simultaneously with an extraordinary surplus in another. Add to this the complete absence of organized credit in Siberia, whether for general purposes or in reference to grain, and the fact that the peasant makes his chief outlays in autumn when grain is cheap, while in years of scarcity he must buy it in spring when it is dear, it follows that the peasant is obliged to throw the more grain on the market the cheaper it is, and to buy in proportion to its dearness. From all this results one more characteristic feature of Siberian farming, the extraordinary want of fixity in the prices of grain, rising in times of scarcity higher than anywhere in European Russia, and falling in good years to an extremely low level.

In the sketch made in the preceding pages of the position of agricultural production, original Siberia, or the four governments with the adjacent territories of Yakutsk and Transbaikalia to the east, were mainly in view. Of the two last-named territories the former, as far as the beginnings of agriculture exist there, presents a complete agreement with the parts of the Tobolsk government adjacent to the northern boundary of grain raising. Transbaikalia with insignificant differences resulting from its more steppe like character and better climate, approaches the conditions of the conterminous Irkutsk government. No special account is required of the conditions of agriculture in those districts of the territories of Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk where grain is raised without artificial irrigation; they present complete accordance with the conditions obtaining in the wheat regions of the Siberian governments, with but one difference, that the lands are here fresher, and therefore their yield is higher and crop failures occur more seldom.

To complete the picture of agriculture it is however necessary to add a few words on its position in localities where it is placed in conditions absolutely different from those described above, in the Zaisan district of the Semipalatinsk territory and in Semirechia, as well as in the Amour-Ussuri region.

Alike in the Zaisan district and Semirechia, agriculture, as was indicated above, is only possible with artificial irrigation. The fields are here intersected by great irrigating ditches, *aryks*, from which when ploughing, little runlets are led in all directions by the *sokha*, thus distributing the moisture equally over the whole field. In the Zaisan district the irrigated fields are sometimes also manured, and the water is let on first before ploughing, and then, during the growth of the plant, according to the weather, from twice to four times more. As a rule the crops are watered first thirty days after sowing, again fifteen days later, and a third time after the lapse of forty days more. After eight crops the field requires either a three years rest or manuring. During the whole eight years however it is sown with one and the same kind of grain, wheat, rye, millet or oats. An alternation of crops, and even a mere change to another kind of grain, are not practised here, because the seed, falling during the operation of harvesting, springs up and would only spoil the next crop. In the Semirechensk territory, the irrigated land in consequence of the hot climate yields two crops a year; the winter field sown with wheat and barley ripens at the end of May, and when harvested is sown with a second crop *ماش*, a small pea, millet or carrot, more rarely *кунзхут*, poppy or lentil. The second crops ripen and are removed in the autumn of the

same year. Then the field is sown for the next spring with spring plants, mainly rice and sorghum, and also in small quantities, cotton and lucerne. The harvests in the irrigated lands both of Semipalatinsk and Semirechensk produce very heavy yields, and crop failure are unknown. The grain raised on the irrigated lands not only suffices for the uses of the farmers, but a portion of it goes for sale to China and the nearest Kirghiz nomads.

In the Amour territory a strict distinction must be made between the farming of the Russian population, peasant and Cossack, and that of the natives, Coreans and Manchurians. The Russians practise an extremely extensive system of farming, the newly cleared arable land is ploughed over several times during a whole year, and is then annually sown with grain without fallow or manure until it is completely exhausted. The best clayey soils thus are made to yield as many as fifteen crops, one after another, poor soils not more than seven or eight. During the first years after the clearing, wheat or spring rye is sown, next a passage is made to oats, and then for a year or two, buckwheat. After the last, a crop which somewhat reestablishes the fertility of the soil, they again sow wheat or spring rye, followed by oats, until the latter ceases to produce satisfactory crops. Fields once abandoned are very seldom ploughed up afresh, although they might after a rest yield very fair crops. It is the custom to break up, almost exclusively, fresh hitherto-untouched lands, of which up till now, on account of the recent settlement of the country, there is no lack. The yields of grain are in a quantitative respect very high, but the quality of the Amour grain is far from satisfactory. The excess of moisture prevents the regular ripening of the grain, which is dark, of light weight and of low nutritive value.

The same character on the whole attaches to Russian agriculture in the Ussuri region except that in order to avoid soaking, sowing is here carried on in rows in the form of small ridges, the furrows remaining between them serving as drains and for ventilation.

As far as concerns the Coreans and Manchurians living in Amouria their farming, in opposition to the Russian, is distinguished by great intensiveness. The size of the cultivated plots is not great, but on the other hand the fields are most carefully tilled, the sowing is in rows by hand or machine; the young plants are weeded several times during the summer, so that weeds are hardly to be seen on the fields of the Coreans and Manchurians. While they are such a dangerous enemy of the crops of the Russian population. The chief crop among the Coreans and Manchurians is *b u d a* (*setaria Italica*); next follow various other cereals and garden plants; *buda* is also their chief food. An expenditure of eighteen to twenty pounds of seed on a *dessiatine* gives one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds or more, so that the yield of one *dessiatine* provides a whole family for a year, or a year and a half.

Having finished the description of the principal systems of agriculture existing in Siberia, it is necessary to proceed to the consideration of the statistics of its present position. «The Chernoziom constitutes», says Brehm «the true gold of Siberia». And in fact agriculture is now the chief and safest occupation of the settled Siberian, and in it consists the whole future of the country. It may be assumed that from the whole territory of Siberia there is, on an average, harvested about 160,000,000 pounds of various grains, of which approximately 20 per cent fall to Tobolsk and Tomsk, as the most densely populated, 12 to 15 per cent to Yeniseisk and Irkutsk and Semirechia, 3 to 5 per cent to each of the territories of Semi-

palatinsk, Akmolinsk and Transbaikalia. The remainder is divided between Yakutsk, the Littoral and the Amour territories. As regards the two latter territories and certain localities of steppe regions it must be observed that, thanks to successful colonization, the agricultural productivity of these localities has latterly grown extraordinarily rapidly, and that there is no doubt but that in the near future they will occupy a very prominent place in the ranks of grain producing countries. Turning to the kind of grain cultivated in Siberia, it must be observed that about 60 per cent of the whole production consists of spring wheat and oats, about 20 per cent winter rye, while the remaining 20 per cent represents all other kinds of grain.

The instability of the prices is the most striking feature, as also the uncertainty of the harvests, in the wheat area, and this is particularly the case in the southern part of the Tobolsk government. The average prices for this locality are as follows:

|                       |                                                                  |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Rye in kernel . . . . | 20 — 25 kopecks per pound                                        |
| Wheat . . . . .       | 50 — 60 » » »                                                    |
| Oats . . . . .        | 1.20 — 1.30 roubles per chetvert<br>or 20 — 22 kopecks per pound |

The minimum price to which rye has fallen during the last 20 years was 8 to 10 kopecks a pound; the maximum limit, in 1870, 80 kopecks to 1.20 roubles; in 1884, 1.50 roubles, and 1892, over 2 roubles per pound. The rapid change of prices may be seen for example from the fact that between the autumn of 1887 and that of 1888 the price of rye in the southern part of Tobolsk enhanced almost fivefold, namely from 12 to 15 kopecks to 60 to 70 kopecks per pound. In localities situated to the east of Tomsk, which sow for the most part rye, the fluctuations of grain prices, as also those of the harvests, are somewhat less severe. The average grain prices rise in moving from west to east. Thus, in the north-eastern part of the government of Tomsk the prices during a twenty-five years period were as follows:

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Rye flour. . . . .   | 48 kopecks per pound |
| Wheat flour. . . . . | 76 » » »             |
| Oats . . . . .       | 41 » » »             |

In the Irkutsk government the standard average prices for the last seven years were:

|                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Rye flour about. . . . . | 1. 20 roubles per pound |
| Wheat » . . . . .        | 1. 90 » » »             |
| Oats . . . . .           | 1. 10 » » »             |

The fluctuations for the Tomsk market during the last twenty-five years fall between the following limits:

|                     | Maximum.      | Minimum.   | Ratio of max. to min. |
|---------------------|---------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Rye flour . . . . . | 1. 45 roubles | 23 kopecks | 6. 3                  |
| Wheat » . . . . .   | 1. 80 »       | 30 »       | 6. 0                  |
| Oats . . . . .      | 1. 10 »       | 17 »       | 6. 5                  |

Thus, the fluctuations in the prices of grain in the Tomsk government although considerable are far from reaching the intensity attained by the fluctuations in the wheat localities of the Tobolsk government. In the agricultural governments of Eastern Siberia the fluctuations in prices exhibit approximately the same character. In such localities of the Tobolsk government, where farming with the application of manure has already become established, the prices and harvests are distinguished by great stability, which naturally has a very good influence upon the prosperity of the population. Thus, at the extreme northern boundary of agricultural operations in the Tobolsk government the prices for grain during the last ten years were :

|                                 | Maximum.     | Minimum. | Average. |
|---------------------------------|--------------|----------|----------|
| Per pound of rye flour. . . . . | 1.30 roubles | 55 k.    | 80 k.    |
| » » » oats . . . . .            | 1.00 »       | 40 k.    | 55 k.    |

Thus the maximum price exceeds here the minimum  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times. Independently of the fluctuating movement, the prices of grain in all the agricultural localities of Siberia have further a tendency to rise, which is explained among other causes by the expansion of the sale of Siberian grain for distilling and export to European Russia. The prices of the Tomsk market may give a perfectly clear idea of this rise. These prices, during a twenty years period, taken for each five years, give the following increasing series:

| Y e a r s :                      | Average price per pound. |                           |       |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
|                                  | Rye flour.               | Wheat flour. <sup>a</sup> | Oats. |
| Five years . . . . . 1870 — 1874 | 31 k.                    | 66 k.                     | 33 k. |
| » » . . . . . 1875 — 1879        | 32 »                     | 54 »                      | 34 »  |
| » » . . . . . 1880 — 1884        | 58 »                     | 86 »                      | 43 »  |
| » » . . . . . 1885 — 1889        | 60 »                     | 88 »                      | 44 »  |

In proportion to the progress made by the works on the Siberian railway, the rise in the prices for grain in the agricultural regions will doubtless proceed still faster.

### Live Stock Industry.

Cattle raising in the localities containing the main mass of the Siberian population, that is, in the whole agricultural tract of Siberia, plays only a secondary part in the economical life of the population. Its dimensions and relative importance change in dependence mainly upon the relation between the quantity and quality of arable lands, on the one hand, and of the lands adapted to the purpose, namely meadows and pastures, on the other. Siberia is on the whole very rich both in meadows and pastures, although the low nutritive value of forest herbage makes it necessary in the greater part of Siberia to expend much more hay and grazing space upon rearing cattle than is required under similar circumstances in European Russia. Siberia nevertheless is capable of sustaining much more cattle than it does at

present. But as the main mass of peasant labour is expended upon agriculture, cattle breeding actually attains large dimensions only where there exists, on the one hand, an abundance of meadows and pastures, and on the other hand, the lack of arable land liberates in summer time the greater part of the working capacity of the peasantry, and where at the same time the bad quality of the ploughed land forces the peasants to seek some supplementary source of existence. Thus, in the Tobolsk government cattle raising is especially developed in the steppe localities of the Tiukalinsk district, in the Tomsk government, in the steppes of the Kainsk district and in the Chulym part of the Tomsk district, all of them being localities where agriculture is placed in comparatively bad conditions. But in these places even the importance of cattle breeding can nowhere be placed above that of agriculture. The latter still yields the main support of existence, it feeds the population, while cattle breeding only serves to satisfy its comparatively secondary necessities, and to make good those deficits which appear in the peasant economy in consequence of bad harvests.

The extent of live stock breeding is very various both for whole localities and for individual homesteads. There are well to do farmers who have from 10 to 15 farm horses, 25 to 30 head of large-horned cattle, 40 to 50 sheep. There are again wealthy men who have 40 to 50 horses and a hundred or more head of cattle. Finally, some men are so poor that they possess either no live stock at all, or only one horse or a cow. Turning then to averages it appears that there are volosts where the household, leaving out of account young animals, owns 5 or 6 farm horses, 5 to 6 cows, and 15 to 20 sheep. Others again on an average per household have not more than two horses, one cow and 3 or 4 sheep, or even less. Summing up for the whole agricultural tract of Siberia, the standard allowance of live stock per household may be taken at 3 to 4 working horses, 2 to 3 milch cows, with the corresponding number of young cattle, and 6 to 8 sheep.

Horses in the agricultural tract of Siberia are kept mainly for farm work, but in many localities besides this for the conveyance of goods. Upon the tract a considerable part of the horses are kept specially for the passenger traffic, the post et cetera. The Siberian horse is on the whole small, is easily satisfied as regards food and water, and supports alike heat and cold. He is fast but not strong, so that the normal load of the ordinary peasant horse on a good road does not exceed 20 to 25 pouds. Only the better sort of dray horses draw 28 to 30 pouds and for short distances, 35 pouds. The types of horses in different localities of Siberia are not uniform. Thus, in the southern steppe portion of the Tobolsk government the horses are a cross with the steppe or Kirghiz strain, and are distinguished by extraordinary speed and staying powers. In the region around Tomsk the horses are somewhat bigger and do not possess the speed of the steppe or Kirghiz breed, but are on the other hand, very good for heavy draught and farm work, for which the Tomsk horses are famous and fetch a high price over all Eastern Siberia and Amouria. The Transbaikal horse on the other hand, is short and thin and is not distinguished either by its pace or capacity for draught. The prices of horses are everywhere subject to wide fluctuations. In the steppe districts of the Tobolsk government and in the localities of the Tomsk government remote from the tract, the average peasant horse is not worth more than 12 to 15 roubles. In the northern districts of the Tobolsk government and in the tract localities of that of Tomsk, it fetches



20 to 25 roubles. A horse fit for post service costs in either government 50 to 60 roubles. In Eastern Siberia horses are considerably dearer; in the Irkutsk government the average price of a working horse is not less than 35 to 40 roubles; on the Amour a small Transbaikalian horse fetches from 50 to 80, and a Tomsk horse, 100 to 150 roubles.

The horned cattle over all Siberia belong to the ordinary Russian breed. They are small; a full-grown cow has a carcass weighing  $5\frac{1}{2}$  to 7 pouds, rather lean and gives little milk. In summer, on usual feed, a cow gives about  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  vedro, and only when fed on oil cake, from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{5}{8}$  of a vedro. In winter, the yield is much less and does not on an average exceed  $\frac{1}{8}$  vedro a day. Most of the milk obtained from the cows, as well as such products as curds and buttermilk, are used by the peasants at home, and only localities near the towns sell their milk. On the contrary, butter forming an important article of Siberian export is sold from every household possessing more than one or two cows. Here too the butter does not all go to market; the greater part is consumed by the peasants, only the surplus being offered for sale. The quantity sold therefore depends not only on the number of cows, but on the composition of the family. Taking the average family as containing 5 to 6 members, it can with two to three cows, in the localities most favourable to cattle raising in the agricultural zone, sell not more than 10 to 15 pounds per cow; with 5 to 7 cows, 25 to 30 pounds; with 8 to 10 cows, a poud for each milch cow or somewhat more. The butter is made from sour cream. It is not sold in the fresh state but salted down and kept till certain dates, occurring once or twice in the year, when it is bought up by factors who supply it to large merchants who melt it down and clarify it.

The sale of milk and dairy produce has a prime importance for the peasant only in a few localities, principally in the neighbourhood of towns or in the steppes. For the most part horned cattle are kept for slaughter. The meat is consumed mostly by the peasants themselves, only a small quantity being sold in the towns; the tallow and hides are as a rule sold; they go from Western Siberian to European Russia, while a considerable proportion of the hides from Eastern Siberia, of which come from Transbaikalia alone 150,000 skins a year, is used to cover tea boxes.

Dairy farming, and even so very badly organized, is carried on only by peasants in the neighbourhood of the more important towns, Tomsk, Irkutsk, and a few others. Perhaps the most important source of revenue from cattle is the sale of the live beasts, the more well to do peasants selling them at a later age than their poorer brethren. The cattle are bought up by a special class of traders, who slaughter them and either sell the produce in the towns or export the same to European Russia.

The average prices for cattle for some parts of Siberia appear in the following table.

| Regions.                                 | Cows.           | Bullocks,<br>3 yrs. | Bullocks,<br>1½ yrs. |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|
|                                          | R o u b l e s . |                     |                      |
| Southern part of Tobolsk gov. . . . .    | 9—12            | 6—8                 | 3—4                  |
| Middle » » » » . . . . .                 | 10—12           | 7—9                 | 4—5                  |
| Tomsk gov. near capital and on the tract | 12—15           | —                   | 5—7                  |
| Remote parts of Tomsk gov. . . . .       | 10—12           | 8—9                 | 4—5                  |
| Irkutsk government . . . . .             | 25—30           | 20—25               | 5—10                 |

Cattle, like horses, become dearer the further east. At the same time the prices are subject to extremely sharp fluctuations in dependence upon the harvest and the cattle plague. When there is a bad harvest the poor farmer sells his cattle to make up the deficit in his commissariat. On the approach of an epidemic all try to sell their cattle, preferring to do so even for a song than to risk the plague. In both cases a quantity of cattle is thrown upon the market, and the prices fall to almost half, in order to rise more or less considerably after the first good harvest, or after the subsidence of the plague.

The sheep bred in agricultural Siberia belong for the most part to a very bad breed. They yield little meat; a three-year old sheep gives a carcass of 30 to 40 pounds, very little tallow, and wool of inferior quality and of small quantity, namely from 25 to 40 pounds per ten sheep. The produce of sheep farming is almost entirely consumed by the peasant at home. The best breeds of sheep are raised, on the one hand, on the southern borderlands of the governments of Tobolsk and Tomsk, adjacent to the Kirghiz steppe, and on the other, in the Minusinsk region and in Transbaikalia. In the former a considerable part of the sheep belong to the Kirghiz *Kurdiuk* or fat-tailed breed, kept for its tallow; a yearling yields 20 pounds, a three-year old, a pound or more; in the latter place a degenerated race of merinos is bred chiefly for its wool.

Cattle breeding, although as already remarked only a secondary source of the prosperity of agricultural Siberia, affords an essential help in bad years. A terrible calamity for the people, hardly less so than a bad harvest, is the plague, whether the Siberian or *chuma*. Both forms of disease are particularly distinctive in the Barabinsk steppe and the localities adjacent to the Kirghiz steppe, which are the chief foci of the Siberian plague for the whole of Western Siberia. The propagation of epizootic diseases is here facilitated by the careless treatment of the cattle, although they are on the whole very well fed. The standard feed in the majority of places in agricultural Siberia is 150 to 200 and more pounds of hay per working horse with an addition of 10 to 15 pounds of oats, 50 to 100 pounds of hay with a corresponding quantity of straw per cow, and 25 pounds of hay per sheep.

For the Kirghiz of the steppe regions and in part for the Transbaikal Buriats, cattle raising is no longer a secondary but the chief source of livelihood. In the steppes, horses and sheep are the principal live stock, there being but few cattle. The horses are bred for transport and for food in the form of meat and *kumys*, and for sale to the neighbouring settled population, sheep for slaughter for their meat and tallow, of which the steppe variety produces a large quantity. The surplus flocks are sold alive to cattle drivers who take them to the tallow works, where they are slaughtered. The Kirghiz also keep camels which they employ in summer as beasts of burden and in winter harness to common peasant sledges.

The Kirghiz scarcely prepare any hay for winter, but leave the cattle to wander over the snow-clad steppe and pick up whatever food they can. When the snow is soft and does not lie thick, large cattle easily dig down to the dry herbage, and are then followed by the sheep. But when the first snows are succeeded by rain and then by frosts, and the ground is covered with a crust of hard ice, a consequence of such a glazed frost is a lack of fodder during the continuance of which tens and hundreds of thousands of large and especially small

cattle perish. No small number also perish from blizzards or burans, lasting in the steppes several days in succession. Herds of horses and flocks of sheep caught by the storm are unable to stand against the force of the wind. Driven in the direction taken by the blizzard they fall into gullies and ravines covered up with snow and there perish in masses.

In the northern uncultivated borderland of Siberia the wandering native population keep reindeer and harness dogs. The former are indispensable companions of the wandering native. The extreme indifference in the matter of food allows of their being kept in places where no other domestic animals could live, and their services to man are most various. As long as the reindeer is alive he is a beast of draught; killed, his flesh goes as food, his skin furnishes warm clothing, and his sinews yield thread.



## CHAPTER VIII.

**The forest wealth of Siberia.**

The area occupied by forest; the division of the forests into zones; the northern zone of tall conifers and its boundaries; the prevailing kinds of trees; the birch zone and its limits; the importance of this zone for the agriculture and economy of the inhabitants; the zone of mountain forests and its significance; causes serving as an obstacle to the introduction of forestry into Siberia; measures of the Government for the regulating of the forests of Western Siberia; establishment of a Forest Administration; results attained in a short time; the position of forest husbandry in Eastern Siberia; measures for ascertaining Crown forests in the Amour region.

**S**IBERIA belongs to the number of countries abounding in forests. In Western Siberia alone the area of forests belonging to the Crown is estimated at 110,000,000 dessiatines. In Eastern Siberia the area so occupied is considerably greater, but is there not exactly ascertained. The Littoral Amour region is also rich in forest consisting of very various and valuable species.

The vast forest resources are however distributed unequally over the extensive territory of Siberia. The greatest expanse of forest is situated in its northern part, and it is almost entirely absent in the south. According to the density of its tree covering, the whole of Siberia may be divided into three zones, of which each is distinguished by characteristic features and situated in a direction from west to east.

**Northern tall tree Forests.**

The zone of the northern tall-stemmed woodlands stretches uninterruptedly through all Siberia from the Ural to the eastern shores of Kamchatka. This is the zone of the Siberian *urmans* and *taigas*. To the north it borders on the tundras which is the limit of the growth of the larger vegetation. The southern side of this forest zone is determined by the line of the greatest development of corn raising and settled life. Beginning with the Turinsk district it passes through the northern part of that of Tobolsk and abruptly rises along the right bank of the Irtysh to the river Tara, embracing the northern parts of the districts of Kainsk, Tomsk and Mariinsk, thence passes through the whole of Eastern Siberia almost parallel to the main Siberian tract, and in the Transbaikal territory becomes confounded with the southern zone of the mountain forests upon the Stanovoi or Yablonovi range. These forest expanses are interrupted only by large marshes and impassable bogs wherefore many parts of this immense northern taiga have an undisputed right to be called virgin soil, as so far they have not been penetrated by the most fearless trapper. These localities, inaccessible to man, will yet long be subject to only the elemental forces of nature.

The prevailing arboreal forms in this zone are the conifers, the pine, larch, pitch pine, fir and so-called cedar. A complete enumeration of all the species of trees occurring in the Siberian flora with their systematic names has been made already in Chapter II, on the Geography of Siberia. In forestry it is not trees that grow solitarily but those that grow in great masses that are of importance. The deciduous trees possess in this zone an insignificant importance; the swamps show an occasional admixture of aspen and willow, and birch occurs on the skirts of the taiga. In Western Siberia, chiefly in the urmans of Tarsk, Tobolsk and Turinsk, a lime-tree is met with in the form of underwood, which supplies bark and bast which serve as a source of income to the local population.

The northern forest zone occupies all those regions of Siberia where agriculture is impossible from the deficient quantity of heat during the five months vegetative period. The fixed population in this zone is insignificant and grain raising is met with sporadically, here and there, in small patches on its southern border. The forest reaches of this vast zone have up to the present time been abandoned exclusively to the forces of nature and cannot present a pleasant spectacle to civilized man, but preserve within themselves an inexhaustible supply of splendid building material. There are many localities where for tens and hundreds of versts in every direction stand clean plantations of pine, which with their interlaced summits hide the sky. The absolutely naked trunks rising perfectly straight to an enormous height are so monotonous, that a man who once chances into such a part of the Siberian taiga, or even a wild beast, cannot find his way out again. Experienced native trappers are afraid to penetrate into these, in their opinion, enchanted spots, and they record every step they take by scoring the trees. Access to such places is difficult, and the timber contained in them is so far without value, but with the growth of the population, the improvement of the roads and the destruction of the forests in the inhabited parts, means will be found to make use of the now remote forest resources. They form indeed the wealth of the future and are merely awaiting their turn. The scourge of the forests of this zone at the present time is only the forest fires, not unfrequently devastating hundreds of versts. The burned timber is however rapidly replaced by young underwood growing up under the influence of natural selection. It must be observed however that the southern limit of the zone of high-trunked trees is gradually retreating to the north, yielding place to the raising of grain.

### **Birch forest zone.**

The zone of birch forest covers the whole low lying or so-called steppe portion of Siberia. This area is occupied by a settled population and nearly coincides with the so-called cultivated or agricultural zone of Siberia. The principal, it may almost be said, the only forest growth of this zone is the birch with a slight admixture of aspen and t al (salix) upon the damper spots and along the banks of the rivers. Coniferous trees are entirely absent. Merely a few plantations of these species occur on the outskirts of the birch zone, namely those of Borovliansk and Yelets-Ikovsk on the left bank of the Tobol, and Pavlodarsk and Semipalatinginsk upon the right bank of the Irtysh. The two latter estates are outside the birch zone.

The birch thrives on a chernoziom soil and therefore this zone is the most populated and particularly characteristic of Western Siberia, between the middle course of the Tobol and the upper waters of the Obi. This space embraces the so-called steppes of Ishimsk, Akmolinsk, Kurudzinsk, and Barabinsk. Although it is usual to understand by the word steppe an absolutely treeless space, in Siberia with the exception of the whole Kirghiz steppe region, which also produces over large areas shrubs used as fuel in the mining works, all the remaining plains are covered more or less thickly with birch patches or spinnies, in local language *k o l o k s*, giving the locality a very peculiar appearance. These birch copses, mingling when viewed at a distance, produce the effect of an unbroken forest. Traversing hundreds and thousands of versts by the Western Siberian tract, the traveller sees everywhere on the horizon as it were uninterrupted forests. Where here and there these birch spinnies are absent, it is in the majority of cases due to their destruction by the axe and fire and the subsequent pasturing of cattle. Thus the nomad population of the Akmolinsk territory with its numerous herds is gradually thrusting back towards the north the line of forest vegetation in the steppes, on which account the barren desert is ever advancing more and more from the south. The care of preserving these groves in the steppes should be one of the chief duties of the local authorities, especially now that a railway is being carried through this locality. The distribution of birch patches over the steppe surface may for the most part be called ideal, constituting precisely that combination of wood, arable land and pasture which is everywhere and at all times desirable in the interests of agriculture. Thanks alone to this happy disposition of the forests in this part of Siberia, notwithstanding the not wholly favourable atmospheric conditions and the mediocre soil, crops and grass thrive well. The population of this zone would not know bad harvests, were it not that the grasshopper, always laying its eggs in the treeless Kirghiz steppe, creeps thence into the rich crops of the cultivated fields. In this the most densely inhabited zone the birch furnishes the peasant with everything, timber and fuel and wood for every purpose. All the huts and farm buildings in the villages are made of it, even the roofs are of birch bark. Birch is the exclusive fuel in towns and settlements as in works, and furnishes the sole material for all farming implements. The consumption is enormous, and the birch spinnies are melting away like spring snow. This zone is now being cut through by the chief artery of the railway, which will call forth a still greater consumption of birch fuel.

The predominance of the birch in the middle low lying cultivated zone is manifested over the whole extent of Siberia from the Obi to the east. Here the birch zone continues however with some interruptions caused by the contour of the locality. It shows a more characteristic appearance in the Achinsk district and in Transbaikalia.

### **Mountain Woodlands.**

The zone of mountain forests embraces the whole of Siberia from the south. From Semirechia to Vladivostok lies an almost uninterrupted chain of mountains, under various names, Thian-Shan, the two Alatau, Tarbagatai, Altai, Sayan, Stanovoi range, Yablonovy, and

others. The northern slopes of these mountains are almost everywhere covered with forest. Here the forest vegetation is very various, but conifers prevail, such as the larch, pitchpine, pine, cedar. They yield a timber of excellent quality, but the exploitation of mountain forest presents great difficulties. Such plantations are remote from inhabited spots, the felling of the timber upon the steep slopes is accompanied with no small risk. Not seldom the trees grow upon cones with such abrupt sides that the felled tree falls down below and is broken into shivers, damaging at the same time all the small saplings it meets with on its way. The rivers in the mountainous places are full of rapids and do not permit of raftage. In the territories of Semipalatinsk and Semirechensk the Kirghiz transport logs from the defiles upon camels. The mountain forests have an extremely great importance in the economy of the country. Independently of the fact that with the carrying through of the railway there will appear private initiative in the exploitation of the forest wealth, the forests covering the steep sides of the mountains serve as a mighty regulator of the flushing of rivers and of the humidity of the atmosphere. Hence the proper management of the mountain forests and their defense from destruction constitute a pressing need of Siberia.

The forest areas of Siberia which have brought in, and in many places even where they do not bring in any revenue to the Crown, were for a long time free from any surveillance. Even now there is a direction in the law to the effect that «the inhabitants of Siberia are allowed the free use of the forests for all their needs and for the construction of vessels, without payment (Art. 411, Forest Code, ed. 1876). The law regarding the Siberian forests as a «gift of God», according to the expression of the peasants, or as a free gift like air and water, it was not to be expected that the local population should take any trouble to preserve them; the heaping up of windfalls, frequent fires, unsystematic felling, the pasturing of cattle upon the nearest clearings, have brought the majority of timber estates to a chaotic condition, while in the more inhabited parts of Siberia even a lack of forest has made itself felt.

From the beginning of the sixties the Government began to trouble itself about the introduction of some order into the use of the timber of Western Siberia. In 1863 in the governments of Tomsk and Tobolsk, and in the territories of Akmolinsk and Semirechensk, temporary regulations were introduced establishing a tax per stump and sagene for the use of wood. The preservation of the forests in Western Siberia was imposed by the said rules exclusively upon the rural population, allowing them in return the right of free use for their own needs, but not for sale. The looking after the fulfilment of the rules was imposed upon the volost administrations. This measure however did not bring the expected advantage. The population was burdened with a natural service, timber was cut for the works and towns, but the Crown received nothing. Nor was this all, in 1869 a law was promulgated, granting a certain company the unlimited right of making use of Siberian timber for industrial purposes. This company was permitted to cut timber free on the banks of the Obi and Yenisei and their tributaries for the building of ships and the export of lumber. (Art. 412, Forest Code, ed. 1876). Apparently this company made a generous use of the right granted it, as timber trees have almost entirely disappeared from the shores of these chief rivers of Siberia. It must however be remarked that the term of the priveleges, granted the company, has expired.

With a view to the proper administration of the forests of Western Siberia since the year 1884 it has been placed upon the same footing as that by which the Crown forests of European Russia are managed, a paid forest guard being introduced. The peasants are required to look after the forest placed at their disposal. In the course of its eight years existence, the Administration has effected not a little for the organization of the Crown forests of Western Siberia. The timber estates have been ascertained and described, every year only that part is appointed to be cut which is permissible according to the conditions of each estate; the dues have been regulated, control over the raftage of the timber has been established, as well as over the conveyance of it to the steamer wharves and the works and manufactories. By means of such measures, without any burdening of the local rural population, which as before enjoys the timber for its own domestic uses free, it has been found possible to bring the revenue of the Crown from its property in Western Siberia to 500,000 roubles a year. This figure, considerable for the present time with the existing very low prices for wood, cannot give even an approximate idea of that enormous revenue which the forest resources of Siberia promise in the near future, when the railway now being carried through the country increases the consumption of wood from the northern timber zone, and when in the south a regular sale of the same is organized to the contiguous and absolutely treeless regions of the Chinese Empire.

In Eastern Siberia all the inhabitants are allowed, as before, free use of the State forests for all their needs, and all forest control is entirely absent. To the present time only one forest estate has been declared exclusively belonging to the Crown, and this only in consequence of a petition of the Irkutsk Hunting Company, who took upon itself the preservation of this estate. The law, although it requires that payment for the benefit of the Crown should be exacted for all wood received from the free Government forests by the various works, and this payment be determined by the quantity of wood consumed by the works, yet as the superintendence of this is imposed upon the Crown courts and the local authorities (Art. 415 Forest Code, ed. 1876) the amount of revenue obtained is extremely insignificant. According to the returns furnished by the Irkutsk and Yeniseisk Crown Courts, the revenue received from the sale of timber and the fines for the breach of the forest code were as in the following table.

| Governments:       | 1889.          | 1890. | 1891. |
|--------------------|----------------|-------|-------|
|                    | R o u b l e s. |       |       |
| Irkutsk. . . . .   | 3,550          | 5,812 | 3,543 |
| Yeniseisk. . . . . | 2,327          | 2,421 | 2,375 |

At the present time in consequence of the increase of the population and of the activity of the works, and also of the contemplated building of the Siberian Railway and the settlement and industrial development of the adjacent localities expected to ensue therefrom, the adoption of measures for the protection of the most important forests of Eastern Siberia is recognized



to brook no delay. The Ministry of Crown Domains is now despatching a party of forest officials to carry out the law of removing the best and most important Crown forests from the free use of the inhabitants, and of their preservation for future time by means of the formation of closed forest estates, and also for the protection of the State forests attached to various industries, works and manufactories.

In the Amour country, steps have been taken since 1888 towards ascertaining the Crown forests and the setting aside of the best of them as closed estates, but the results of the efforts of the forest officials sent into this country have not yet been made clear, the dues on the sale of timber are not yet established and the State so far receives no revenues from its vast property in this part of Siberia.



## CHAPTER IX.

**The Industries of the rural population.**

Industrial earnings; fishing and hunting; the gathering of cedar nuts; bee keeping; the hewing of timber and wood fuel; kустar industries; the carrying trade; concluding remarks.

**A**FTER the sketch of agriculture, cattle raising and forestry presented in the preceding account, which constitute the chief sources of the prosperity of the mass of the Siberian population, there remains now to pass to a survey of the other and secondary sources. In consequence of their merely auxiliary importance it is only possible to set apart a much less space than was necessary to devote to agriculture, so that the pages here following will form not so much a description as a short survey, a catalogue raisonné of those industries in which the Siberian people are occupied.

Most prominent on account of the number of hands employed must be placed the fishing and hunting industries.

The internal waters of Siberia, both the large rivers and the greater part of the steppe lakes, were once very rich in fish. In the lakes there chiefly bred perch, crucian carp, pike, dace and such coarse fish; in the rivers, the most various species of white and red fish, beginning with the same perch and pike and ending with n e l m a, sturgeon, sterlet, eel pout, trout. The abundance of fish was fabulous. There exist credible evidence of a mass of fish, which completely filled the bed of the river from its bottom to its surface, and which even leaped into the windows of passing steamers. At the present time the supplies of fish in the Siberian waters have become considerably exhausted. In the limits of the purely agricultural zone thickly populated with Russians, fishing already almost exclusively serves the wants of the population along the banks for their own consumption, and in but few localities provides them with more important earnings. Fisheries are now principally concentrated in the lower reaches of the great Siberian rivers, outside the limits of the cultivated zone. Thus in Western Siberia there are the districts of Berezovsk, Surgutsk and Tobolsk, and the Narymsk country; in Eastern Siberia, the lower waters of the Yenisei, the Yakutsk territory, Kamchatka, et cetera. The fisheries in these parts are partly without owners, partly belong to the bank population consisting of peasants or natives. The grounds belonging to the peasants are for the most part exploited by themselves individually or on the artel principle. On the contrary, the natives work but insignificant portions of the immense fisheries which actually belong to them. The remainder they let, as a rule for a mere trifle, to the neighbouring

peasants, or, in the majority of cases, to capitalists who conduct the industry on commercial principles with the assistance of numerous parties of hired labourers.

The catching of fish is carried both summer and winter, the most various means being made use of. According to the habit of this or that fish, nets of the most various sizes, lines, seines with several scores of hooks, with bait and without, are employed. In winter, some rivers are fenced right across, and traps are placed in gaps left in the weir. At the end of the winter when the water in the rivers goes bad and the fish rushes for fresh water into the small spring streams, they are caught at such points through holes in the ice in bag-nets, ladles, and even by hand. But the wholesale fishing on commercial lines in the lower reaches of the rivers is carried on exclusively in summer, with the aid of huge drift nets 250 to 300 or more sages in length. In their choice of means for catching the fish, peasants and natives and the traders on a large scale trouble themselves very little about the future and do not disdain to use the most rapacious methods, to which in a large measure must be attributed the exhaustion of the supply of fish in the Siberian waters.

The fish once got, if not consumed on the spot, goes on the market either frozen or salted. But salting in Siberia is carried out very badly so that the fish acquires a bad taste and quickly spoils. This circumstance is a great obstacle to the proper development of the Siberian fishing trade.

This industry also exists in the Littoral territory in the waters of the Northern Pacific. Besides fish, seals and morses are caught. The meat and fat of the latter are eaten by the natives, the tusks alone being sold. Whales are taken in the same waters, and fur seals on the Commander Islands. This industry will be described in the next Chapter.

Hunting and trapping form the employment mainly of the population of the northern uncultivated horderland of Siberia, as also of the transition zone, separating this region from the cultivated tract. As a secondary occupation they exist also in a fair number of localities of the agricultural zone, situated near enough to the uninhabited forest areas.

The taigas and urmans form the arena of the hunter's industry, these boundless forest lands everywhere lying adjacent to the inhabited zone of Siberia on the north. This industry is conducted partly with firearms or, in the case of some natives, with bows and arrows, partly with traps of the most variable construction. The most widely spread form of sport is squirrel shooting, after which come the killing of various wood and water birds. Fur animals, formerly breeding in abundance throughout Siberia, have now, with the exception of the squirrel, common fox, ermine and bear, almost disappeared from Western Siberia, so that in that country but very few hunters are now occupied in catching either the sable or the marten. The chief supply of valuable peltry now proceeds from the northern regions of Eastern Siberia, where the destruction of wild animals has not yet assumed such dimensions. Large animals, such as bear and elk, are hunted over all Siberia, but this kind of sport is not open to every hunter but only to the more skilful and courageous. In the tundras of Eastern Siberia the native Tunguz and others hunt the northern reindeer; in the southern mountainous parts of the Eastern Siberian governments and Amouria, various kinds of animals, among others the m a r a l, or Siberian stag, whose horns fetch a high price.

The excessive hunting of valuable wild animals, and in particular, extensive forest fires in Western Siberia, compel them to emigrate, driving them mainly eastwards into the virgin thickets of the Yakutsk forests. Here the precious sable is fairly abundant, but hunters are rare. Hunting the arctic fox also forms a not inconsiderable addition to the livelihood of the Yakutsk, Dolgans and other natives. During his migration from the sea up the river, the latter is harred across with nets or fences, and this animal is sometimes caught with the aid of special traps in considerable quantities. Thus, in 1860, during a great migration of arctic foxes on the Yenisei some 7,000 of them were caught.

The earnings of the inhabitants from hunting and trapping belong to the number of the most variable. A less accidental character is attached to squirrel hunting, but even this animal, in dependence upon the harvest of fir-cones forming its chief food, sometimes retires into the most distant forests least accessible to the hunter, at others comes out upon the more nearly situated spots. In the latter case the sport yields good results. Good hunters get during a winter in the Tobolsk government 200 to 300 head, while further to the east they kill as many as 500 squirrels per gun. When the majority of the squirrels retire to the remote parts of the forest, the best hunter will not shoot even a fifth part of this figure. The hazel hen or *riahchik*, shot in the Tobolsk government mainly for the European Russian market, yields a fairly constant earnings, the hag in one winter reaching 50 to 100 brace, and if very successful much more. The shooting of other birds such as blackcock, wildgeese, and ducks, has not much importance in Siberia. Such birds are mostly shot for sport, and but small quantities are offered for sale. As to the pursuit of fur animals, as well as bears and other such wild animals, all here depends on chance. With luck such a chase produces earnings of hundreds of roubles. With bad luck it happens that the hunter, after wandering through the forest half the winter, returns either with nothing at all or with a booty which does not cover the cost of feeding himself and his dogs. The main fur animals taken in Eastern Siberia are the sable, fox, marten and *kolonok* or Siberian weasel. Ermine for the lack of demand are hardly shot at all. The chief fur traders are the natives, both because they own by prescription all the best grounds, and because they possess as regards this industry much greater knowledge, skill and endurance than the Russian peasant.

For the convenience of the natives of the northern region of the governments of Tobolsk and Yeniseisk and the territory of Yakutsk, for whom hunting forms if not the only, at any rate, one of the chief means of existence, the Government in many places makes them loans of powder, shot and lead. For this purpose the native grain stores are constantly provided with the necessary supplies of these articles, and the natives very eagerly avail themselves of the privilege in order to avoid being indebted to private traders.

The same boundless Siberian forests are the centre of another industry also very important in the economy of pretty considerable portion of the population, the gathering of cedar nuts. This industry exists in all the Siberian governments. The cedar forests, sometimes of small size, but not seldom extending to tens and hundreds of square versts, are scattered through all the *urmans* and *taigas*, and are for the most part, as mentioned above, left by the Government to the free enjoyment of all who wish to make use of them. People collect to gather these nuts from settlements situated thirty and fifty versts from the grove, and sometimes over one hundred versts.

They assemble from the more extensive regions according to the greater size of the cedar plantation itself and the better the crop. Crops do not happen every year. On an average the nut ripens once in two years, but frequently the harvests are so insignificant that cedar groves that are at all remote do not attract any traders. Good harvests generally do not occur more often than once in four or five years, and excellent harvests happen once in ten to fifteen years. In the gathering of the nut a division of labour is commonly practised. The fir cone is plucked from the cedar by the strong, skilful workmen called *lazoks* or climbers. They throw the fir cones on the ground where they are picked up by others, mostly youths and women. With a good harvest, a *lazok* and his two or three helpers will gather thirty to fifty pouds of nuts, or when the harvest is exceptional, one hundred pouds or more. In the Tobolsk government the harvests are not so great as further to the east. But as the nut sells in the government of Tobolsk much dearer, the earnings are about the same in all the Siberian governments, the relative crop being the same also. A *lazok* gets 50 to 100 roubles from an average harvest, and 200 to 250 roubles and more from an exceptional one. One such harvest sometimes leads to the prolonged improvement of the economical condition of that part of the population which has chanced to avail itself of it.

Among the forest industries in Siberia must also be referred bee keeping, which is fairly developed throughout the Altai mining district and in the nearest parts of the remaining districts of the Tomsk government. Bee keeping in Siberia is carried on with the help of hives of very simple construction called *borts*, hollowed out of thick trees. The bees are bred in the woods, and receive no artificial food, but feed themselves on the plants and bushes flourishing in the taiga. The dimensions of these bee farms are very various. Some beemasters own not more than three to five hives while others possess from five hundred to a thousand, and more. The average size of a peasant's bee garden in the localities where the industry is most highly developed, namely in the groups of settlements lying on the very edge of the taiga, may be taken as seventy-five to a hundred hives. In such places the number of beemasters forms a third, half or more of the total householders. The extent of bee keeping has now considerably diminished compared with what it was fifteen or twenty years ago. Not a few bee gardens have ceased to exist, and in those that remain the number of hives has diminished by half or more. Two causes lie at the root of this state of things, bad harvests of bee food, and diseases of the insects themselves. Numbers of hives perished altogether, while others began to yield much less honey. Formerly each hive gave not less than an average of one poud of honey, while half the quantity is now considered a very good yield.

The forest again is the arena of a whole series of industries, where nature gives man not a finished or almost finished product as in the cases above, but only a material, upon which he must expend his labour. Here first and foremost comes the hewing of timber and especially the cutting of wood fuel. The regions where these industries are most developed are scattered over all Siberia, being concentrated in the neighbourhood of the more considerable towns and along the navigable and raftable rivers. Thus Tomsk is surrounded with a region containing about fifteen thousand souls, where the preparation of wood fuel for the town population is one of the chief sources of livelihood. Similar districts encircle Tiumen, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk, although these towns receive the greater part of the timber and wood they require by raftage from comparatively distant localities.

As to the riverside localities, there the principal activity is connected with the furnishing the steamers with wood fuel annually consuming on the Obi alone enormous quantities. Some spots situated up stream above the more considerable towns, hew and make up into rafts both timber and fuel for the latter. Thus Tiumen gets nearly all its timber from the southern part of the Turinsk district, Tobolsk from volosts of the same district and from that of Tobolsk, lying along the river Tavda.

Every peasant hews for himself, while the large orders are undertaken by more or less extensive firms. The latter employ a mass of workmen either on hire or by special contracts.

Household industries in Siberia do not present any great variety. The most important branch, employing the greatest number of hands and affording the population the largest earnings, comprises various forms of wood industry, partly in satisfaction of the needs of the local peasantry, partly of those of the carrying trade occupying such a prominent position in Siberia. Individual kustars are met with everywhere. More or less extensive groups of kустar population are concentrated mainly in spots where there is easy access to the raw material, and a ready sale for the manufactured articles. The largest of these groups are situated around the towns of Tiumen, Tomsk and Irkutsk. The first embraces a considerable part of the Tiumensk and Turinsk districts. The articles here made are carts, shovels, wooden vessels, simple furniture, and other things used in the life of the peasantry, to which must be added wood fibre, mats, wheels, trade sledges and appliances used in fitting out caravans. Articles belonging to the first class are hawked about the villages and sold to the peasants, while those belonging to the second class find a market in Tiumen among the carriers employed in the inland trade. The needs of the latter traffic employ most of the energies of the kustars in the Tomsk region. They make sledges, carts, wheels, axles, yokes, thills, horse collars, tar, troughs for the horses, charcoal for the smithies, all of which are sold in the bazaar in Tomsk. The same goods predominate in the kустar industry of the Irkutsk region. Here, as in the Tomsk region, various kinds of wooden vessels, furniture, articles made of birch bark and some kinds of turned goods are produced, all constituting objects of every-day use among the peasantry.

It thus appears that the forest yields the Siberian peasant the most varied earnings, and is the chief source whence deficits on account of agriculture and cattle rearing are made good and the peasant's budget balanced. Unfortunately however the forest wealth of Siberia is in a lamentable state. The exhaustion of the supplies of game and fur animals was referred to above, but the forests themselves in Siberia are being destroyed exceedingly rapidly, considerably more rapidly indeed than might be expected with the actual insignificant density of the population. Of fine, actually virgin forests, at any rate in the cultivated part of Siberia, very little has remained, while the southern districts of the Western Siberian governments are already to a considerable extent stripped of trees and are experiencing a deficiency not only in timber, but not seldom also in wood fuel. The cause of this phenomenon lies in the immoderate and disorderly fellings, destroying many times more than the annual addition permits, and in the forest conflagrations extending over hundreds and thousands of square versts.

The importance of the industries not connected with the exploitation of the forests in regard to the general economy of the country is not great. Attention must here in the first place be directed to hand spinning and weaving, converting flax and wool into linen and coarse cloth. Weaving has an almost exclusively domestic character; but small quantities of linen and cloth are offered for sale, the main mass being consumed in the form of clothing by the peasantry. Further, in many localities, particularly those near the towns or the tract, home-spun linens and cloths are driven out by imported manufactured fabrics. Next, notice must be taken of the leather, sheepskin, wool beating in connection with the making of felt shoes, hat, girdle, worsted glove, and other industries, all of which are of universal occurrence. Ordinarily those employed in these industries live isolated in different settlements, occupying themselves with their particular industry as an aid to agriculture, and working in their own or the neighbouring villages at piece work upon material not their own. In some places however sheepskin dressers, makers of felt shoes, and tanners live in whole communities, specialize to a greater extent in their trade and work for the population of more considerable regions lying around. The second of these trades is established on a large scale in the Kurgan and Tiumen districts of the government of Tobolsk, which supply not only the neighbouring localities, but also the Eastern Siberian market.

Other trades are carpentry and joinery, brick making, and similar branches, which while existing everywhere, here and there form small industrial communities. Of the more refined industries may be mentioned the making of metallic sieves, carpet weaving and sign painting in the Tiumen district, the construction of mills in Ishim, the dressing of hare skins near Tomsk, the winnowing fan industry in the Mariinsk district and in the Altai, as well as some others. All these industries exist only in distinct settlements or groups of settlements, but are somewhat highly specialized in the region of their distribution and provide the population employed in them very considerable wages.

To complete the description of the peasant industries, there still remains to say a few words upon the carrier trade and the occupations connected with it. The conveyance of goods constitutes the chief form taken by this industry, and with it is occupied not only a considerable part of the population dwelling in the immediate vicinity of the tracts, but a large number of peasants living at a distance from the latter in the sphere of attraction of one or other of the leading depots, that is, mainly Tiumen, Tomsk and Irkutsk. The principal branch of this trade is that along the great Siberian tract, including the carriage of goods between the different localities of Siberia and European Russia. Next in order comes the conveyance of provisions of all kinds to the gold mines and the grounds of the native nomads, situated without the pale of the cultivated zone of Siberia; after this, follow the rest. But by far the most important of all is the traffic over the great Siberian tract of which it is necessary to speak.

The chief articles of export from European Russia into Siberia are the most varied productions of manufacturing industry, beginning with ladies fashions and confectionery and ending with machinery and bar iron. From Western Siberia into European Russia are conveyed grain and the produce from the slaughter of cattle, such as hides and tallow, while from Eastern Siberia goes almost exclusively tea with which many thous-

ands of carts are annually loaded. The total goods traffic over the Siberian tract even now employs hundreds of thousands of horses and tens of thousands of people, although as was said above its dimensions at the present time have considerably shrunk, compared with former times. At the same time the revenue therefrom has notably fallen off. While the average payment for carriage formerly for example between Tomsk and Irkutsk, about 1,500 versts, was from 2.50 to 3 roubles per poud of freight, it does not now ordinarily exceed 1.60 roubles to 1.80 roubles, and sometimes falls short of this figure. The expenses of the road on the other hand have not only not diminished, but rather, thanks to the enhancement in the price of grain, have even increased. Thus in former times a man with five horses during a trip from Tomsk to Irkutsk and back lasting two months earned, after covering all expenses, from 200 to 250 roubles. Now the net profit under average conditions does not exceed 40 to 50 roubles, and in case of misfortune, especially embezzlement of goods for which the carriers are bound to answer, not seldom large losses are incurred. The peasants continue to occupy themselves with the business of carriers under these circumstances only because, on the one hand, it is important for them to receive at one time in the form of earnest money comparatively large sums, and on the other, they count as pure profit the maintenance during the journey of man and beast whom it would otherwise be necessary to keep during the course of the winter with no return.

In any case the carrier trade on the Siberian tract is at the present day far from being what it was formerly and together with it all the earnings of the population of the points situated along the tract have fallen into decline. Among such earnings were the baiting of the caravans, the conveyance from station to station of fast traffic goods, which went by changes of horses, the replacement of tired horses in the trains of carts, the unloading and transshipping, ensuing on the freezing of rivers, or the damaging of roads, passenger traffic of the most various kinds and various occasional earnings. All this now does not yield the fourth part of the former income, and the population of the tract is forced to occupy itself ever more and more with agriculture.

The preceding disquisition has not exhausted, nay had not in view, the exhaustion of all the kinds of non-agricultural earnings falling to the peasant population of Siberia. The review of these earnings had to keep in view only the most important and to indicate their place in the economic life of the population. This place, speaking of non-agricultural earnings on the whole, is at the present time considerable only for those parts of Siberia which lie without its cultivated zone or on the borderlands of the same. In the agricultural zone non-agricultural earnings now too play a secondary part. The future of the Siberian peasantry is inseparably bound up with the future of agriculture and is therefore in close dependence on the improvement of the technical and especially of the economical surroundings of the latter.





## CHAPTER X.

**Hunting and the fur industry in the Far East.**

The seal industry; cursory sketch thereof from the end of the eighteenth century; the Russian-American Company; Hutchinson, Cool, Filipeus and Co.; statistics of the yield of seal skins; the preparation of the fur; the trade in skins in London; activity of the firm of Hutchison and Co.; formation of the Russian Association of Seal Traders; new conditions of the lease; piratical destruction of the seals; international agreements for the regulation of the seal industry; beaver, arctic fox, morse and whale trades; fur industries; total dimensions of the yield of furs for all Siberia; mammoth ivory.

THE hunting of fur and other animals in the Far East has formed for more than a hundred years a source of revenue to the State. In consequence of the remoteness of this region, the Government always farmed out these industries to private undertakers, reserving to itself the sovereign right of controlling the regular carrying on of the industry and preserving the animals from extermination.

The most considerable of the industries named is the catching of the sea fur seal (otaria), that bear-like seal yielding an exceedingly valuable fur, while its capture is comparatively easy. The Russian name *morskoi kotik*, or sea-cat, is far from answering to its appearance. The fur seal is a fairly large animal, attaining a length of seven feet, its average length being about an arshine. Extremely lively and quick in its movements in the water, on land it is exceedingly clumsy and therefore exceedingly helpless. This animal has several varieties, of which the best known is the *otaria ursina* or *calorhinus ursinus*, breeding in the northern part of the Pacific Ocean between California, Japan and Behring Straits. Another variety, *otaria australis*, breeds in South America on the Galapagos Islands; A third variety, *otaria pusilla* or *arctocephalus antarcticus*, breeds at the Cape of Good Hope. A fourth variety, *otaria Forsteri*, upon the oceanic islands near Tasmania, and others. Possessing splendid fur the otaria early attracted the attention of sea hunters, who long sought the spot where this animal comes out upon dry land to breed.

It was only at the end of the last century that the celebrated navigator, Commander Behring, succeeded in discovering a group of four islands, called in his honour the Commander Islands. One of them, upon which subsequently the navigator himself perished, was called Behring Island, and another Miedny. The two others, on account of their small dimensions,

have no importance. It was ascertained that upon Behring Island at a particular season of the year the fur seals appear in enormous numbers. However the hunters, intimately acquainted with the seal industry, were convinced that besides the said group of islands the seal must have other asylums, in the search for which much time and trouble were expended. A daring skipper, Pribylov, in a small sailing craft, the «St. George», spent two years in such quests, fortunately crowned with complete success by the discovery of a group of islands in the same Behring Sea, and called in honour of this navigator, the Pribylovs. One of these islands was named after the ship St. George; another, St. Paul. Independently of the two above-named navigators, in the part of the Pacific between the north-western shore of America and the north-eastern shore of Siberia, there constantly hovered a crowd of different adventurers, hunters of fur animals, who not seldom succeeded in discovering new lands and planting there the Russian flag. Thus, the sailor Nevodchikov, in charge of the merchant Guprov's expedition, discovered in 1745 the Blizhni, Attu and Agatu islands. In 1759 the trader Glotov discovered the Lisi Islands. In 1760 the trader Tolstykh discovered the Andreanovsk islands, called after his Christian name, and others belonging to the Aleutian and Kuril groups.

On close examination of the matter it proved that the main mass of fur seals came out on the Pribylovs Islands. Not so very long ago there appeared upon them annually five million seals, while the number on the Commander Islands was not more than two millions. Judging however from the latest information these figures must be considerably diminished especially for the Pribylov Islands, for the animals scared by the piratical traders have of late years begun to appear more frequently upon the shore of the Kamchatka peninsula, upon the north-eastern shore of Siberia and the north-western shore of North America, and apparently the animal is becoming more marine, rarely coming out on land. Again the seals are already appearing in diminished numbers upon Tiulen Island near Sakhalin, about 10,000 only, upon the Kuril Islands forming part of Japan, at the Cape of Corinth in the Argentine Republic, at the Cape of Good Hope, upon the Falkland Islands, in Tasmania and many other places of the southern hemisphere, where it would seem the animal in question in former times was met with in countless numbers. Thus it resulted that not far back, only twenty-five years ago, Russia was the only country in whose territories the highly valuable seal industry was carried on. But since 1867, when the Russian possessions in North America, together with some islands from the Aleutian archipelago, were ceded to the Government of the United States, the advantages of this trade are shared with the latter country.

In order to explain the economical importance of the seal industry to the State and to define its dimensions, it is necessary to say something on the life of the animal itself and the value of its fur.

Of the favourite haunts of the seal in the Behring and Okhotsk seas, the Pribylov Islands, St. George and St. Paul, are now the property of the United States, and the Commander Islands, Behring and Miedny, and Tiulen are within the limits of the Russian dominions. The Commander Islands, lying at a distance apart of 30 miles, and 100 miles from the nearest point of the continent of Kamchatka, are deprived of all vegetation, covered with rocky mountains and in part with marshy tundras. The damp sea air yielding abundant

atmospheric precipitation makes the climate of these islands extremely unhealthful, and it is exceedingly probable that but for the existence there of seal rookeries they would remain uninhabited. The Tiulen Island adjoins the eastern shore of the island of Sakhalin and is as inhospitable as the Commander Islands.

At the end of April or the beginning of May the seals approach these islands; the males come out on the shore, choosing spots for the establishment of the family and defending them from being seized by others. By the end of May the females approach the shore, and are enticed upon the selected locations by the males, each male absorbing ten to fifteen females.

A male that has reached full physical development is called on the islands *siekach*, corrupted from the English «sea catch»; a young *siekach* with small withers is called a *half-siekach*, one without withers, a *kholostiak* or bachelor, and so on. The chief constituent of the catch is the *kholostiak*, two and three years old, which is taken at the time preceding moulting, that is to say, from the beginning of June to the middle of July, although the slaughter of the seals continues not unfrequently to September. According to Colonel Voloshinov, who was sent by the Government to investigate the position of the seal industry, the seals are killed as follows. Having found the spot upon which the flock of *kholostiaks* has taken up its position, the inhabitants early in the morning run out to the seashore thus cutting off the animals retreat and drive them with sticks further to the point where it is proposed to slaughter them. The seals are so helpless that ten to fifteen men can drive at once almost the same number of thousands of the animals, and then even one or two men are sufficient to hold a herd of five or six thousand seals in the drive. A group of twenty to thirty head are cut out, and when those which are suitable as to sex and age have been ascertained, they are killed by a blow on the head with a stick. The head bones of the fur seal are so weak, that with one slight blow with a stick the animal may be killed on the spot. In a few minutes on the place chosen for their slaughter a heap of slain, among which the mortally frightened animals left alive on account of their unsuitability are seen writhing, with difficulty finding their way to the sea. After finishing with one heap, a second party is divided off, and then a third, and so on. In a short while thousands of bodies fill the place of slaughter. Twenty men can easily drive off and kill a thousand seals in the twenty-four hours. Simultaneously with the carrying on of the slaughter, another party of workmen is employed in removing the skins and salting and packing them in rows in sheds. The population of the Commander Islands occupied in killing seals consists of extremely various elements. It was formed from the workmen who were brought thither by the traders partly from the continent of Asia, partly from that of America, while others chanced here accidentally. There are thus to be met with here together with Kamchadals and Aleuts, Yakuts, Cossacks and others.

On Behring Island the conditions of life are less severe than on Miedny, and therefore the population on the former is twice that on the latter. The total population of both islands does not exceed six hundred souls. On Tiulen Island there are no fixed inhabitants, men coming there from Behring Island for the slaughter of the seals and, the work done, returning home. During nearly half the year the island is thus left unprotected and then foreign vessels

frequently call and their crews complete the slaughter of those animals still left on the island. The population of both the Commander Islands has an organization based on the commune, the whole earnings being divided among all the workmen on certain principles, a small sum being annually set apart as reserve capital. In consequence of the exceptional conditions under which the seal industry is carried on, only the ships of the lessees come near the Commander and Tiulen islands, and consequently the furnishing of the population with the necessary supplies is entirely in the hands of the Crown contractors. The latter here are afforded the right of free trade, and although by agreement the company is obliged to sell its goods at a fixed price confirmed by the authorities of the islands, this point has always called forth a number of misunderstandings. In the same way, from the absence of competition, the inhabitants of the islands were compelled to sell beaver, arctic fox, and other furs which were not included in the company's rights, at prices fixed by the agents of the latter. On concluding the agreement with the lessees of the industry, the Government held only the seal industry to be the property of the Crown, not touching the question of the beaver and arctic fox. At the same time the two latter together yielded the company enormous gains, without in any way profiting not only the State, but even the inhabitants themselves, from whom the company obtained the skins at an incredibly low price. The fishing was also free from any control on the part of the State, and beyond providing the inhabitants with food brought the latter very little advantage, although they expended no little labour upon it. Now with the new contract these conditions have been considerably changed for the better, and the relations between the aborigenes of the islands and the lessees of the industry are more clearly defined. To render clear the present position of these industries in the Far East, it is necessary to throw a hurried glance at the relation of the Government to this matter.

In the XVIIIth century, as has been already said, the fishing, fur and other industries upon the Siberian shore of the Pacific, and in the Russian possessions in North America, as well as on the Pribylov, Commander, the Kuril and other islands lying in Behring and Okhotsk seas, occupied many individual traders and companies, who possessed no regular organization. This latter fact led to constant misunderstandings among them in the settlement of which the Government was forced to interfere. To put an end to the disputes among the hunters and traders in furs and to establish a regular order for the exploitation of the business, the largest representatives of it, the merchants Shelekhov and Galikov, in 1780 formed a company with the object of despatching small expeditions «to Alaska, called the American land, to islands known and unknown, for the carrying on of the fur industry and all explorations and the establishment of free trade with the natives». The energetic initiators personally visited all the nearest islands, crossed over to the American continent and having become acquainted with the local conditions were easily convinced of the advantages of the undertaking. However to guarantee success it was necessary for them to further ensure themselves from the Government the exclusive right of carrying on the industry, which Shelekhov and Galikov succeeded, in 1788, in doing, without any particular trouble, as the Government at that time had not its own representatives in the Far East. Soon the new company was completely reorganized; new workers with fresh capital entered it, and in 1798

it was Imperially confirmed under the title of the United American Company. The Emperor Paul took a lively interest in the fate of this company; by an ukase of the 8th June, 1799, he took it under His protection and ordered it to be called the Russian-American Company, at the same time granting «in reinforcement of the undertakings of the company all possible assistance on the part of the military authorities with land and sea forces on demand made by the same». In virtue of this ukase the Russian-American Company was granted, among other things, «the right to make use of the fisheries and establishments upon the north-western shore of America, north of 55° north latitude in Behring Sea, and further on the Aleutian, Kuril and other islands; to discover and occupy lands to the south of 55° north latitude, if these lands are unoccupied by any nation; to enjoy the use of all that has yet been discovered or shall in the future be discovered in these places, both on the surface and in the bowels of the earth, without any claim on the part of others; to navigate to all the neighbouring peoples and to carry on trade with all the powers lying around»

Thus the Russian-American Company did not limit its activity to the fur trade alone, but set itself a wider scope and even had a political character. Thanks to its exclusive position, during the first term of its privilege, namely twenty years, it earned 20,024,698 roubles, paying its shareholders a dividend of 30 per cent. The continued progress of the company was still further assured when in the beginning of the twenties of the present century the Government recognized the necessity of limiting the rights of foreigners to trade in Behring Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk, as also on their shores. With varied fortune the company at the expiration of one term renewed its privilege, enjoying without competition, if not the sole, at any rate the richest fur seal fishery in the world, namely that of the Commander and Pribylov Islands, as also on the less important points of the Pacific coast of North America and Siberia within the limits of Behring Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk.

The demand for seal skins was then very small, and it was apparently declining from the beginning of the present century, as in 1817, 60,000 seals were caught on the Pribylov islands alone, while twenty years later the Russian American company took on the same islands only 7,000 skins. In the same year, 1837, about 4,000 seals were caught on the two Commander Islands, so that the total quantity of skins got by the American Company in the thirties did not exceed 11,000. These skins, dressed like any others, and even rather roughly, found a sale almost exclusively in Russia and China, in the former country fetching about six roubles apiece. In Kiakhta these goods until March 30, 1861, were bartered for silk goods, tea, and other productions of China. In the thirties a sharp change took place in the sealskin trade. Instead of merely preparing the skin as heretofore, the fur itself was subjected to treatment, the long hair being all plucked out and the remaining down dyed a dark brown colour. An exceedingly elegant article was thus obtained and quickly a large demand for it arose in England. But in consequence of inability to salt the skins, they spoiled in the prolonged voyage in sailing vessels from the Pribylov and Commander islands to London past Cape Horn.

Notwithstanding however this inconvenience, sealskin furs began to be more highly valued in England, than in Russia and other places, so that the whole of these goods began to gravitate to London, and soon the latter became the centre of the world's

trade in sealskins. The business was so profitable that already in 1849 a special manufactory was founded in London which to this day turns out false sealskin materials. The decision taken in 1867 by the Russian Government in regard to the cession of its North American possessions with part of the Aleutian Islands, namely the Pribylovs, to the United States, put an end to the monopoly of the Russian-American Company. Deprived of its best fishery upon the Pribylov Islands it could not count on its former profits and therefore resolved to wind up its affairs, making various claims against the Government for breach of contract before its termination. In satisfaction of these the Government was obliged to buy all the company's shares, while A. Filipeus, carrying on trade in the Far East, acquired the latter's property in the ports of Kamchatka and the Sea of Okhotsk.

The Russian-American Company during the first period of its activity from 1799 to 1821, that is, 23 years, took upon the Commander, and other islands, 1,232,374 fur seal skins; during the second period from 1822 to 1841, that is, 20 years, 458,502 skins; and during the third period from 1842 to 1861, that is, 20 years, the catch was 338,600 skins.

During the last years of its existence the company considerably increased its activity, and finally in the last year, 1868, the slaughter of seals reached unheard of dimensions.

| Years. | Pribylov Islands. | Commander Islands. | Years. | Pribylov Islands. | Commander Islands. |
|--------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1862   | 34,294            | 4,000              | 1867   | 75,000            | 4,000              |
| 1863   | 25,000 (?)        | 4,500              | 1868   | 242,000           | 12,000             |
| 1864   | 26,000 (?)        | 5,000              | 1869   | 87,000            | 21,000             |
| 1865   | 40,000 (?)        | 4,000              | 1870   | 23,773            | 27,500             |
| 1866   | 42,000 (?)        | 4,000              | —      | —                 | —                  |

On the termination of the activity of the company, the seal industry and trade in furs in those remote localities remained without Government control, in consequence of which the inhabitants of the Commander Islands were left without regular supplies. Interesting himself in their fate, the local Governor-General Korsakov proposed to M. Filipeus to undertake to provide the islands in question with the necessary provisions. At the same time in St. Petersburg lively negotiations were being carried on in reference to the concession of the seal industry in the Far East to a new lessee. There was no lack of candidates, but the choice fell to the American house of «Hutchison, Cool and Co» which half a year before, on the 3rd of August, 1870, under the title of the «Alaska Trading Company» had concluded a contract with the Government of the United States of North America for the right of caching fur seals on the islands of St. George and St. Paul, forming part of the territory of Alaska. On the whole the contract with America consisted in this that the company paid the treasury 55,000 dollars a year, and in addition two dollars per skin, undertaking at the same time to engage in catching the seals only during certain named months

of the year, to the number of not more than 100,000 skins in the season on both islands. The contract was concluded for 20 years till the 1st of May, 1890. For the same term the company on the 18th February, 1871, concluded a contract with the Russian Government for catching seals on the Commander Islands, Behring and Miedny, and on Tiulen Island. They bound themselves: 1. to take into their body a Russian subject; 2. to pay 5,000 roubles a year and two roubles for each fur seal skin taken from the said islands, and further to pay 50 kopecks to the inhabitants of the islands for each full-grown and perfect skin received from them. In 1877 these conditions were subjected to substantial alterations in respect to the payment per skin, so that the inhabitants were paid at the rate of one rouble instead of 50 kopecks for the first 30,000 skins, and the Crown received at the same time instead of two roubles only one rouble 75 kopecks.

The new company without delay set about placing the trade in seal skins on a more regular footing, to which contributed in particular the opening not long before, in 1869, of the Pacific Railway connecting the Atlantic with that ocean. Thanks to this new communication the Alaska Company was in a position to forward its fur goods from the Pribylov and Commander Islands to London in a shorter time. Independently of the shortening of the route, it was then recognized as advisable for the convenience of the preparation of the skin and its preservation from damage during the voyage, to salt it without previously removing the fat, which with the former method of transport oxidised and spoiled the goods. Soon the Alaska Company began to put on the London market a large quantity of skins, striving at the same time to improve the quality of their goods and to attain uniformity of selection.

The Company introduced order and system into the selection of the sort of skins and in their preparation for transport, attaining in this respect the very best results. Its goods became exemplary. During the time of its existence from 1871 to 1891 the Alaska Company got skins to the following amounts.

| Years. | Commander Islands. | Pribylov Islands. | Years. | Commander Islands. | Pribylov Islands. |
|--------|--------------------|-------------------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1871   | 3,412              | 97,002            | 1881   | 43,522             | 101,734           |
| 1872   | 29,318             | 101,698           | 1882   | 44,620             | 101,736           |
| 1873   | 30,396             | 101,555           | 1883   | 28,696             | 77,063            |
| 1874   | 31,272             | 107,932           | 1884   | 52,652             | 101,013           |
| 1875   | 36,274             | 101,249           | 1885   | 41,737             | 101,509           |
| 1876   | 26,960             | 89,478            | 1886   | 44,500             | 100,772           |
| 1877   | 21,532             | 77,956            | 1887   | 46,754             | 100,795           |
| 1878   | 31,340             | 101,394           | 1888   | 45,000             | 100,450           |
| 1879   | 42,752             | 106,908           | 1889   | 55,493             | 100,135           |
| 1880   | 48,504             | 100,634           | 1890   | 55,727             | 20,995            |

Judging by these data, the catch of seals on the Commander Islands is systematically increasing, while in the figures for the yield on the Pribylov Islands a certain diminution seems

to be noticeable. American investigators of the seal industry place this circumstance in dependence upon the enhanced destruction of the animal on the Pribylov Islands, in consequence of which the seals are beginning to avoid them, preferring the Commander Islands and the remotest parts of Kamchatka. But however it may be, during recent years seals have begun to appear more frequently on Russian possessions, the quality of the skins it would seem at the same time becoming better. The cause of such a change is as yet not sufficiently elucidated, but the fact itself only is established.

Although *de jure* the Alaska Company was the only firm possessing rich seal fisheries, yet *de facto* the London market was furnished with the goods in question from other sources. Skins were obtained from various parts of the Southern, Indian and Pacific oceans. In the majority of cases however the goods proved to be contraband, that is, they consisted of seal skins, taken without distinction of sex or age, on every convenient opportunity on land and sea. In consequence of such piratical character of the industry, the goods could not only not be prepared properly, but could not even be kept in good condition. They came on the London market in the majority of cases in a very bad shape, and there had to be effected the difficult task of sorting and dressing them. Of the best quality were considered the skins from the Scottish Islands, in the Antarctic Sea, next the product of the Pribylov, Commander, Tiulen, and lastly, those obtained near the shores of Victoria, upon the Kuril Islands, and near Cape Horn.

The dressing of the fur consisted of three processes, the plucking of all the long hair, the tanning of the skin and the dyeing of the short down that was left. The last operation was considered the most difficult and the secret of the process was long the property of one firm only. The whole treatment of the skin cost from 5 to 15 roubles, according to its size and quality. The selling prices were subject to great fluctuations, but on the whole, American skins were valued higher than Russian, the former fetching 30 to 45 roubles apiece, the latter only 20 to 25 roubles. According to the data of 1882, skins from the Pribylov Islands, with an average weight of 8.2 pounds, were valued at 41.62 roubles; those from Tiulen Island, weighing 9.3 pounds, 23.50 roubles; and from the Commander Islands, 9.5 pounds, 23 roubles, that is, little more than half the American. When finished, sealskins from London find a sale, mainly in America, namely about 100,000 skins per annum; next in England, 80,000; France, 15,000; Germany and other countries, 7,000; and Russia, 1,000.

Thanks to the measures referred to as taken by the Alaska Company the London fur market became more lively; in 1860, some 20,000 skins were sold there; in 1867, 52,000; in 1869, 108,000; in 1872, 129,000; in 1875, 136,000; in 1880, 148,000; in 1885, 141,000.

Almost the whole of this quantity of furs was furnished by the Pribylov and Commander Islands.

| Year. | Pribylov Islands. | Commander Islands. |
|-------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1875  | 99,634            | 34,479             |
| 1880  | 100,161           | 38,900             |



| Year.       | Pribylov Islands. | Commander Islands.    |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1885        | 99,874            | 48,929                |
| 1886        | 99,947            | 41,750                |
| 1887        | 99,949            | 54,584                |
| 1888        | 100,037           | 46,296                |
| 1889        | 100,031           | 47,411                |
| 1890        | 20,994            | 52,765                |
| 1891        | 17,652            | 59,724                |
| 1871 — 1891 | 1,883,897         | 730,539 (1873 — 1891) |

Thus the success of the sealskin trade is due in a considerable degree to the Alaska Company having been able to organize on a sound basis the commercial and the industrial part of the undertaking. And yet at the same time it acted upon the islands leased by it so rapaciously, and reduced the scanty population to such a hopeless position, that it excited just reproaches both in America and in Russia. Making use of its privileged position, the Alaska Company furnished the inhabitants of the islands with all the necessary supplies, but fixed the prices so high that notwithstanding the high earnings of the inhabitants from the seal, beaver, arctic fox and fishing industries, they always remained in debt to the Company, and were constantly in want of every necessary. During the first fifteen years Messrs. Hutchinson, Cool, Filipeus and Co. paid the treasury annually 5,000 roubles, and in addition to this a payment per skin to the extent above stated, which on an average amounted to 64,420 roubles per annum, assuming the average yearly catch in Russian fisheries at 34,200 fur seals. Independently of the said payment to the Crown, the Company paid the inhabitants on an average 37,588 roubles per annum. The same Company for the same 15 years caught on the Pribylov islands on an average 95,930 seals per annum, that is, about two and a half times as many as in the Russian waters, but paid the Government of the United States much more in proportion. The lease cost 110,000 roubles, that is, 22 times that paid in Russia; the royalty payments amounted on an average to 504,000 roubles, that is, 8 times as much, and finally the inhabitants received 77,000 roubles, that is, quite twice as much, although their number on the Pribylov and Commander Islands was approximately the same. In consequence of this, in order on the one hand, to somewhat increase the revenue to the Crown from the seal industry, and on the other, as far as possible, to regulate the relations between the lessee from the Crown and the inhabitants of the Commander Islands, the question arose of the renewal of the contract with the firm of Hutchinson, Cool, Filipeus and Co. before the expiration of the lease, with the condition of the immediate increase of the payment per skin in favour of the Government.

The company expressed its readiness to increase the piece payment to 7 roubles, during the course of both a new 10 years lease and the three years unexpired of the action of the old contract. Under these conditions, the increase of the rent came out approximately at

300,000 roubles per annum. However, notwithstanding the obvious advantageousness of this proposition, nearer acquaintance with the matter showed the necessity of deferring for some time the solution of the question of retaxing the seal industry, in consequence of the question raised in 1887 of an international agreement for the adoption of measures against the piratical destruction of seals in Behring Sea. The result of this agreement determined, to a considerable degree, the profitableness of the undertaking. Moreover, it was borne in mind that the renewal of the rating of the Prihylov Islands, imminent in 1890, must affect the issue of the fixing of the rent of the Commander Islands.

The subsequent circumstances fully justified all the above stated presuppositions and at the new auction a mass of candidates appeared from among the representatives of Russian industry with more advantageous propositions. Out of many competitors the Government gave the preference to the firm «The Russian Seal Fisheries Association», founded by Grünwaldt, Lepeshkin, Prozorov and Savich, and concluded a contract with it on the following principal bases: Section 1. The term of the lease is for 10 years, till February 19, 1901; the association is to receive from the administration of the Commander Islands the skins of seals, beavers, and arctic foxes. Section 2. The quantity, season, place and method of killing the animals is determined by the local authorities. Section 4. The association pays to the Crown per sealskin 10.38 roubles; per first class beaver, 115.335 roubles; per second class beaver, 57.6675 roubles; per first class blue fox, 11.535 roubles; per second class blue fox, 5.77 roubles, and per white fox, 2.31 roubles, all in gold. Section 8. The association is bound once a year to furnish the islands with all necessaries with an addition of only 20 per cent to the purchase price. Section 11. The association must employ ships exclusively under the Russian flag. During the first year of its existence, 1891, the «Russian Seal Fisheries Association» took from the administration of the islands 30,689 sealskins, one first class and one second class beaver. In the following year, 1892, there were handed over to the same association 31,315 sealskins, to the amount of 325,049.70 roubles gold; heavier skins of the first class, 88, for 10,149.40 roubles, of the second class 108, for 6,228.9 roubles; arctic foxes of the first quantity 1,601 for 18,467.535 roubles; of the second 807, for 4,656.39 roubles, and finally, 9 white foxes, for 20.79 roubles, or a total of 364,571.95 roubles gold, which is equivalent to half a million paper roubles.

Thus the new lessee from the Crown, notwithstanding a considerable diminution in the number of animals killed, gave the Government fully five times as much as, in the course of 20 years, was received from Hutchinson, Cool and Filipeus.

The falling off in the number of animals killed, above referred to, is explained by the activity of the piratical schooners in Russian waters, which is increasing with every year. This is caused by the increased protection of the American waters on the part of the Government of the United States. The question of the preservation of the seal industry from destruction by persons occupied in the illegal catching of these animals, possesses an extremely great international importance and therefore it is necessary to elucidate it as fully as possible. Already in the time of the Russian - American Company, which acted almost without control in Behring Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk, foreign vessels were sometimes observed to appear off Russian shores with the object of secretly bartering various goods for furs with the local inhabitants, or

even of secretly killing seals, but the said company on its part took energetic measures against such piracy, thanks to which the latter was not able to assume large dimensions. When the company's affairs were wound up, in 1868, and particularly during the time preceding the concession of the seal industry to another company in 1871, according to the evidence of the Russian Consul General in San Francisco, the regular organization of the illegal exploitation of both the seas commenced at first by the Americans and Canadians and then by all other lovers of gain at other people's expense.

In particular, Anadyr Bay with the Holy Cross and Anadyr gulfs, not being protected by Russian authorities and little visited by cruisers, became, thanks to their convenient anchorage, the favourite ground of those occupying themselves with the illegal industry. They systematically depraved the uncivilized native population, intoxicating them with brandy and receiving from them valuable furs for almost nothing. Besides this, several considerable fishing firms in San Francisco openly caught cod and other fish between Sakhalin and the Kuril chain, in the bays of Penzha, Gizhiga, Tauisk and Udsk. This they practised unpunished, due to the absence of Russian cruisers in those waters. In Kamchatka, and on the nearest islands also, a considerable quantity of fur animals were killed, such as arctic foxes, heaver, bear, red and black foxes, Siberian gray-chested foxes, sahle, martens. All these valuable furs were sold by the natives to various piratical traders for brandy, powder, shot, guns and all kinds of rubbish. From this cause the sea beaver particularly suffered, their number beginning to rapidly decline from the irregular way in which they were hunted. This circumstance compelled the Russian Government to take measures against such injurious trade and with this object, in 1875 it first despatched to the Far East the clipper «Gaidamak» to suppress the illegal trade in spirits with the inhabitants of the Russian coast. Afterwards, more than once, other vessels were detached from the Pacific squadron with the same object, and since 1884 a military guard has been maintained on the Tiulen Island during the summer and autumn months. The occasional despatch of Men of War to protect the fur industries did not always attain its object, and therefore since 1891 the transport «Yakut» has been sent to cruise constantly in Behring Sea. The result was the confiscation of the piratical schooners, employed in the prohibited catching of fur seals, the crew being always set at liberty without the exaction of any fine.

The Americans on their part took a series of more energetic measures for the protection of their coast from the piratical catching of marine fur animals. For the regulation of this matter, and the establishment of a close season for seals, in 1887 arose the question of the necessity of an agreement between the governments of Russia, Great Britain, and the United States of America. The conferences however appointed to deliberate the subject, at first in London and then in Washington, with the participation of the countries interested, did not lead to any definite results; and meanwhile the piratical activity of foreigners not only continued, but apparently even increased. Fur seals were killed not only on land, but in the water without distinction of age or sex in consequence of which a quantity of animals perished without profit to anyone, as the wounded retired to sea and there died in large numbers. The destruction of the females led to the death of the young seals still dependent on

their mothers' milk. On the Tiulen Island the Russians, on returning thither in the spring, frequently found thousand of bodies of various ages, the traces left of the presence there of the pirates in the late autumn, and of their slaughter of all the animals still remaining upon the island.

The chief obstacle to the establishment of an international agreement was the declaration of the Canadian minister of navigation and fisheries, Tenner, that the multiplication of fur seals is not harmed by hunting them in the open sea but by the piratical attacks to which certain islands are subjected which possess seal rookeries, and that for the preservation of the fisheries it is perfectly sufficient to protect the rookeries. Great Britain demanded preliminarily to the decision of the question of preservation, the collection of the results of supplementary investigations upon the mode of life of the fur seal, but the Government of the United States energetically opposed the further postponement of the question of the establishment of the necessary agreement and succeeded in winning the point. In 1891 the United States of America concluded a treaty with Great Britain by which the killing of seals was temporarily prohibited for the subjects of both the said states in the waters of Behring Sea, situated to the east of a line of demarcation fixed by the treaty of 1867 between Russia and the United States. This agreement had a peculiarly fatal effect upon the Russian seal industry, as the Anglo-American pirates incommoded in the limits of the Canadian and Federal possessions, directed their criminal activity mainly to Russian waters. According to information afforded by the New-York Russian Consulate in 1891, 81 schooners were employed in the clandestine catching of seals by whom more than 50,000 skins were taken, of which about 9,500 were in Russian waters. According to the same authority, in 1892, 62 vessels were employed in this trade, two of which being steamers, and they took 45,000 skins, 15,000 of which were from Russian waters. Notwithstanding the considerable character of the figures quoted there is reason to think that they are far below the fact. The returns of the London market, which is the centre of the sealskin trade, lead to the same conclusion. According to the communication of the Governor of the Commander Islands, 60 schooners were observed in their neighbourhood in 1892, which occupied themselves with killing seals on land and on the water, one party of the pirates carrying out the slaughter while the other returned the fire of the guard protecting the fisheries. Their audacity reached such a height, that the slaughter of the seals was carried on in the rookeries themselves. This piracy is growing more and more every year and as it is the interests of Russian subjects that suffer most from it, this Government could not but direct attention to such an abnormal state of things.

The consent of Russia to the above mentioned Anglo-American agreement of 1891 would only have a value for her in case of the extension of the prohibition mentioned to the waters of Behring Sea also lying to the west of the line of demarcation of 1867. However the Government of Great Britain has declined such a statement of the question and from that time Russia has taken no further part in the negotiations. But protecting her own interests she has found it necessary to pass a new law by which the seal industry on the sea is absolutely prohibited, the killing or catching of seals, or in general, the seal industry on land, is only allowed with the permission of the Government, according to regulations established by it for the purpose. For carrying on the sea industry, as well as for the unauthorized killing on land, the guilty parties are subject to imprisonment from two

months to a year and four months, their appliances, catch and vessels used in the industry with cargo and everything on board being confiscated. To make the protection still more effective, the number of special cruisers occupied with enforcing them will soon be increased by two new vessels.

The beaver and arctic fox industries continue to remain in the same unfavourable conditions in which the seal industry was till the promulgation of the last law. Beavers appear not only on the Commander Islands but also on the coast of Kamchatka, especially near Yellow Cape where they have their dams. However the predaceous persecution to which they are subjected is forcing the animals to constantly seek new sites for their dams, more remote from man. Latterly beavers have begun to come out on the land between Capes Kamchatka and Stolbovy. The fur of the Kamchatka beaver is peculiarly highly esteemed, fetching from 300 to 400 roubles per skin, while the Commander beaver is sold at a third of that price. Thanks to the high value of the fur, beaver are hunted very energetically, in consequence of which their destruction is taking place very fast and they are becoming more and more rare.

The morse industry, like the last, is gradually declining, this circumstance being a direct consequence of the development of the piratical catching of sea mammals by English and American filibusters who shoot them with guns. The flesh of the morse is used as food, the skin for making the covering of the yurtas of the aborigenes in the Far East. The tusks form the subject of a lively trade. The filibusters further clandestinely distribute to the Chukches guns and powder for hunting the morse, and then barter the tusks for rum, brandy and tobacco.

The whale trade, as is already mentioned above, never possessed a regular organization and large commercial development in the Russian territories of Behring Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk. The whale, proceeding from the Pacific to the Arctic Ocean, collect in considerable numbers near the Chukotsk peninsula, especially between the Providence Bay and East Cape. This industry annually attracts here a crowd of American and English whalers, who partly are themselves employed in killing them, and partly in obtaining the whalebone from the Chukches. Judging from the accounts in the American papers, specially devoted to this industry, it may be assumed that foreign whalers annually carry away from the Pacific coast of Siberia from 100,000 to 150,000 pounds of whalebone, valued at about 6 roubles a pound, not less than 100,000 pounds of morse tusks at about one rouble and fifty kopecks a pound, and a quantity of blubber and other products. Thus the whole industry in the Russian waters of the Pacific yields various products to the amount of one and a half million roubles per annum; but this trade escapes Government control being always carried on in a contraband manner.

There have been several attempts to organize the whale industry in the Far East of Russia, but not one has met with success. The credit of the last attempt of the kind belongs to the retired Captain of the second rank A. G. Dydymov, to whom the Ministry of Finance granted in 1887 a loan of 50,000 roubles for three years, for the equipment of a steam whaler, but this officer having made an excellent beginning to his enterprise in the Sea of Japan perished somewhere on the coast of Korea at the very commencement, leaving the killing of whales in the Russian waters of the Pacific still an open question. The said industry requiring the

preliminary expenditure of a considerable capital, and presenting great danger, at the same time is ceasing to be profitable. The last circumstance is in connexion with the progress of the Russian petroleum business. With the appearance of Russian cheap kerosene in the Far East, the price of animal illuminating oil began to fall fast, and was of course unable to stand the competition of mineral oil. In consequence of this the most valuable article of the whale industry at the present time is whalebone, from which extremely solid and fine fibres are prepared which admirably replace horsehair in various plaited goods.

Independently of these two industries, there are yet others needing protection from piratical or rapacious exploitation, whether by foreigners or Russian subjects. The necessary information is being collected by the Government on the basis of which at no distant date the required rules will be drawn up.

The Okhotsk Sea, long celebrated for its abundance of fish of every kind, always attracts a crowd of fishermen who carry away out of Russian waters great quantities of fish, the most important being cod. This fish is caught most of all between Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, and in particular between capes Olotersk and Stolbovy.

For completeness, the sketch of the fur industries in the Far East carried on in the sea and on the coast, must be supplemented by an account of the condition of analogous industries on land. Great forest fires started partly intentionally for the purpose of clearing the land for tillage, partly arising accidentally from the careless handling of fire, and most of all the rapacious destruction of timber accompanying the construction of barriers when hunting fur animals, all these causes have combined to thin the forests, which circumstance has again affected the diminution of such animals in the forests. Among the most valuable species the foremost place is taken by the sable which not so long ago occurred in vast numbers in all the forests of the Littoral Territory. Now comparatively smaller numbers are caught, namely about 10,000 skins valued at about 100,000 roubles. Next come the ordinary, and the excessively rare black foxes, blue foxes, gnutons, ermine, raccoon, polecats, squirrels, otter, the brown and white bear, Siberian weasel et cetera.

The main mass of the peltry of the Far East on account of the insufficiency of the ordinary communications, is sold for almost nothing to Chinese factors, who export this class of goods principally to their own country. For example, in 1891 there passed through Kiakhta into China 22,590 roubles worth of otter, beaver and bear skins, 112,000 roubles worth of wolf, lynx and fox skins, and other kinds not specially named to the amount of 130,774 roubles. Thus organized the fur trade brings the country comparatively little. And yet undoubtedly this industry has a great importance especially in a country where nature has placed impassable obstacles in the way of the development of agriculture. In the greater part of the territory of the Far East, particularly in the northern zone, the nomad, nay even the settled population, is placed by climatic conditions in the regrettable necessity of contenting itself with hunting various animals, and with fishing. In many cases the Government comes to the aid of the helpless aborigenes, furnishing them with powder and shot for hunting, and in those places where fishing is the sole source of existence, Government stores are always ready, with hemp, horsehair and other articles required in the preparation of nets, and other fishing tackle. These things are distributed to the remotest re-

gions, being supplied to the well-to-do at the cost price to the Government and being issued to the poorer classes according to the resolution of the rural societies by way of loans with obligatory payment next year. Without such Government aid the population, in consequence of its extreme poverty and its not being able to acquire the tackle in sufficient quantity and of due quality, would in many places suffer frightful want of food, even although the rivers abound in fish.

As has been explained before, not only the aborigenes of the Far East but the inhabitants of many places of the original Siberia have converted the chase of wild, mainly fur animals, into an industry providing them with the necessities of life. And as nature has endowed Siberia with an enormous quantity of valuable fur animals, the said industry has a great importance to the country, the more so that, as already said, the Far East is the chief centre of the Siberian fur industries, where virgin forests, affording asylum to every wild beast, are yet preserved.

There unfortunately exist no exact statistics of the fur industry, but summing up the information in the hands of the Government and of private institutions interested in the fur trade, it may be assumed that the dimensions of the former for the whole of Siberia are approximately given in the following table:

|                             | 1879.                                             | 1886.  | 1887.  | 1888.  | 1889.  | 1890.  | 1891.  | 1892.  |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Black foxes. . . . .        | —                                                 | 2      | 45     | 34     | 33     | 30     | 29     | 24     |
| Grey-chested . . . . .      | 2,684                                             | 1,812  | 1,694  | 813    | 436    | 1,694  | 1,913  | 2,321  |
| Ermine. . . . .             | 18,454                                            | 26,313 | 34,254 | 24,536 | 21,618 | 19,011 | 7,306  | 12,416 |
| Arctic foxes and cubs . . . | 116                                               | 294    | 2,495  | 2,891  | 2,927  | 2,866  | 4,099  | 2,986  |
| Sable of all kinds . . . .  | 22,752                                            | 7,317  | 7,441  | 9,825  | 18,610 | 18,176 | 20,149 | 31,312 |
| Otters . . . . .            | 165                                               | 168    | 3,295  | 2,706  | 3,866  | 4,246  | 3,508  | 2,300  |
| Red foxes . . . . .         | —                                                 | 4,111  | 23,758 | 12,218 | 22,000 | 19,405 | 22,334 | 16,659 |
| White (arctic) bears. . .   | 3                                                 | —      | 10     | 9      | 3      | 38     | 28     | 45     |
| Bears . . . . .             | 314                                               | 526    | 1,643  | 1,389  | 1,118  | 432    | 1,114  | 218    |
| Wolves and dogs . . . .     | 1,456                                             | —      | 5,008  | 2,664  | 19,840 | 23,916 | 31,932 | 7,803  |
| Mink. . . . .               | 449                                               | 3,423  | 4,689  | 1,956  | 1,867  | 2,624  | 1,108  | 6,215  |
| Siberian weasel . . . . .   | 3,432                                             | 19,431 | 4,367  | 12,257 | 5,634  | 11,367 | 4,612  | 10,123 |
| Squirrels . . . . .         | O n a n a v e r a g e a m i l l i o n s k i n s . |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Lynx. . . . .               | 75                                                | —      | 3,597  | 5,206  | 3,109  | 2,489  | 3,485  | 3,395  |
| Martens . . . . .           | —                                                 | 4,860  | 6,256  | 1,364  | 9,244  | 4,684  | 2,492  | 6,384  |
| Siberian tigers . . . . .   | 6                                                 | 8      | 4      | 11     | 21     | 15     | 9      | 4      |
| » leopards . . . . .        | 32                                                | 38     | 39     | 24     | 29     | 28     | 26     | 23     |
| Pyzhiks. . . . .            | 1,109                                             | 1,364  | 1,684  | 1,573  | 1,932  | 1,917  | 716    | 1,223  |
| Cats . . . . .              | 9,684                                             | 13,412 | 18,450 | 16,486 | 31,434 | 29,318 | 26,415 | 15,773 |

In explanation of the figures quoted it may be observed that herein are not included hares, as this small animal is everywhere caught, and on account of its little value, does not form an article of export, but is confined to local consumption. Moreover, herein are not included the furs taken in the lands belonging to the Cabinet of His Majesty.

From the same table it is clearly to be seen how rich Siberia is in every kind of fur, which is far from being absorbed by the local consumption. A large amount is sent through the Pacific ports of Siberia abroad, partly to America, partly to Europe, or more strictly to London. Part of the goods, offered for sale in the markets, is despatched overland through Irbit and Nizhni-Novgorod to Moscow, whence it is distributed to the whole of Russia and finds its way in considerable quantities to Leipzig. Thus the Russian fur trade is concentrated mainly not in Russia but in London and Leipzig, the more valuable furs being collected in London.

In concluding this review of the industry in fur and other wild animals in the Far East it will not be superfluous to say a few words on the gathering of mammoth ivory in supplement to what is stated above on the same subject. This business, although not organized into a regular industry, but having rather a casual character, altogether furnishes the population a pretty considerable source of income. From the Yakutsk territory alone in 1891 about 700 pounds of mammoth ivory valued at 15,000 roubles were exported. This article and morse tusks annually appear on the Yakutsk market to the amount of 30,000 to 40,000 roubles.





## CHAPTER XI.

**Industry, Commerce and Ways of Communication.**

The mineral wealth and the mining and metallurgical industries of Siberia; general items of the mining and metallurgical industries of the Urals; the mining and metallurgical industries of Siberia; gold, silver, lead, copper, iron, tin, mercury, sulphur, coal, graphite, naphtha, salt, rare minerals and building materials.

THE Great Siberian Railway enters upon the borders of Siberia after having traversed the southern portion of the Urals, that metallurgical treasure house of Russia. The numerous iron and copper works, the gold diggings and coal fields situated along the eastern side of the Urals are, speaking strictly in a geographical sense, already within the limits of Asia, although in an administrative sense they are included in the governments of European Russia. Without touching upon the details of the mining and metallurgical industries of the Urals, it is however impossible not to mention them in an article devoted to Siberia, all the more as the construction of the Great Siberian Railway is of very great importance to the works of the Urals as a means of extending their market. During the last five years the works, mines and gold diggings of the Urals have yielded as in the following table:

|                          | 1887.                           | 1888.                           | 1889.                           | 1890.                           | 1891.                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                          | P o u d s.                      |                                 |                                 |                                 |                                 |
| Gold. . . . .            | 649 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 665 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 641 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 642 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 705                             |
| Platinum . . . . .       | 269                             | 166                             | 161                             | 173 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 258 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> |
| Copper. . . . .          | 163,045                         | 156,777                         | 157,949                         | 173,307                         | 174,403                         |
| Pig iron. . . . .        | 23,425,846                      | 24,039,236                      | 24,725,521                      | 27,703,679                      | 29,923,510                      |
| Iron. . . . .            | 13,302,405                      | 13,360,047                      | 14,888,720                      | 14,716,722                      | 15,184,924                      |
| Steel . . . . .          | 2,328,231                       | 2,401,104                       | 2,583,283                       | 2,716,238                       | 3,464,918                       |
| Manganese ore . . . . .  | 50,000                          | 82,700                          | 179,100                         | 143,500                         | 117,596                         |
| Coal. . . . .            | 9,972,089                       | 12,757,123                      | 16,040,023                      | 15,223,649                      | 14,917,361                      |
| Salt. . . . .            | 14,113,100                      | 17,655,800                      | 18,210,050                      | 19,224,590                      | 20,408,482                      |
| Sulphur pyrites. . . . . | —                               | 676,582                         | 896,076                         | 358,285                         | 481,550                         |
| Chrome iron ore. . . . . | —                               | 440,868                         | 253,732                         | 144,667                         | 189,047                         |

The value of the chief products of the mining and metallurgical industries is estimated at from twenty to twenty-five million metallic roubles.

The southern portion of Siberia contains considerable deposits of every kind of mineral, and a mining industry has existed in its different regions for about two centuries. But great mineral wealth still lies untouched in the bowels of Siberia, and its exploitation will become possible when the existing economical conditions will be modified by the construction of the Great Siberian Railway.

The chief mineral riches of Siberia include, among metals, gold, silver, copper and iron. There are also deposits of mercury and tin ores. Among the carboniferous and combustible substances there are, coal and lignite, graphite, sulphur and naphtha; and among salts, common and glauber salts; besides which, Siberia is rich in all kinds of rare stones.

### Gold.

At the time when the gold industry of the Urals was extending more, and penetrating to their utmost northern limits, the existence of gold was not known in Siberia and it was only in 1831 that it was found by private individuals in the mountains between the rivers Toma and Yenisei in the system of the river Kiya. And for a certain period all the endeavours of the gold workers were concentrated in this district. In 1836 they transferred their prospectings further to the east in the spurs of the Sayansk mountain chain, to the borders of the governments of Yenisei and Irkutsk. There rich deposits of gold were found in the wildest and most inaccessible places along the river Birusa. But the activity of the gold miners, whose number was constantly increasing, did not long restrict itself to the gold bearing system of the Birusa. It was enough for one daring gold miner to push towards the north, to the rivers Toungousk, to be followed by many others, and in 1840 and 1841 a large number of rich and very durable gold deposits were discovered between the Verkhnyaya and Podkamennaya Toungouski, which presented a vast store of gold exceeding all those known at that time. The prospectings were pushed further and further to the east, and in 1849 the gold deposits of the Olekminsk system in the government of Yakutsk were put under exploitation. In 1854 the gold industry was established in the Bargouzinsk region of the Transbaikal province. In the Nerchinsk mining region the exploitation of gold has been carried on by the State since 1832, and private individuals were first permitted to prospect for gold in 1864, and in 1865 the exploitation of gold by private individuals was started. In the Littoral province prospecting for gold was permitted in 1866, and in 1868 it was begun in the Amour province. And lastly the discovery of gold deposits in the tributaries of the river Boureya, which fall into the Amour from the left side, was only made in 1875.

At the present time the Siberian gold industry extends over a vast area, and gold is exploited in the basins of the Obi, Yenisei, (with the Baikal) Lena and Amour, within the limits of all the governments and provinces of Siberia. The gold bearing localities along the Obi, Yenisei and Lena are situated in the basins of rivers flowing from the east that is, along the western declivity of the mountain chains which descend into the northern Siberian lowlands from the mountains which border the Arctic Ocean on the south. There are rare exceptions; the gold deposits in different parts of Siberia lie at different

altitudes above the level of the sea, but as a rule they do not rise above 2,000 feet, the height of the mountain chains being twice and three times greater. In the Kousnets Alatau the height of the mountains is from five to six thousand feet and the gold deposits become smaller and poorer as the mountain chain rises towards the south.

The geognostic character of the gold deposits of Siberia also varies in different localities. The gold bearing rock of the Kousnets Alatau is greenstone; on the eastern declivity of this mountain ridge the extreme slopes, down to the openings of the valleys, are composed of clay slate, which higher up the current changes into metamorphic and calcareous clay slates, which change into jaspers and hornblendes near their contact with the granites and diorites.

The predominating rocks of both the northern and southern parts of the Yenisei region is made up of various kinds of metamorphic slates among which clay slate predominates and in some instances passes into mica schist. The northern system also presents granites, gneisses, diorites and porphyries, which appear more rarely in the southern system. In the northern system, limestones, sandstones and conglomerites are also found in places. The gold bearing strata lie in various kinds of slates, near their contact with granites and diorites; and wherever this combination occurs gold is sure to be found. The predominating rocks in the southern regions of the government of Yenisei in the spurs of the Sayansk mountains are granite, cyanite, limestone and metamorphic slates.

In the province of Yakutsk the chief rock of the gold bearing systems of the rivers Olekma and Vitima is a granitic cyanite, which changes in places into a more laminated structure, passing into gneiss, which imperceptibly passes into micaceous, chloritic talc and clay schists. All these rocks are distinguished for their being gold bearing, especially the clay schists. The general character of the rocks of the valleys of the Nerchinsk region is the same, consisting as they do of granite, gneiss, cyanite, greenstone, diorite and dioritic cyanite and felspar porphyries. The geological structure of the gold bearing region of the Amour province, along the river Zei, is composed of micaceous and hornblend gneisses and slates. The characteristic feature of the presence of gold is the passage of the one class of rocks into the other.

The composition of the gold deposits themselves depends upon the rocks surrounding them. The thickness of the deposits varies greatly, from two feet to three sages and more; but generally it varies between two and seven feet. The upper strata of the deposits contain bones of mammoths, rhinoceros, and other extinct and existing animals. All the deposits are covered by a layer of earth, known as peat. The length of the deposits varies from one to fifty versts and more, sometimes with a layer of gold bearing sand, extending along their entire length of sufficient thickness for profitable working. As a rule the richness of the gold bearing strata varies in each deposit; the upper portion generally contains a small accumulation of coarse particles of gold mixed with quartz, magnetic iron and pyrites; in the middle portion the gold is finer in its particles and the sand poorer in gold, and lastly in the tail of the deposit there remains a floating gold dust which only gives traces of gold.

The soil of nearly all the northern portion of Eastern Siberia is perpetually frozen. The frozen state of the soil and the dense forests which subsequently covered the deposits have favoured the preservation of the gold in them, from the wearing and denuding action of the water. Many of the Eastern Siberian gold deposits show undoubted traces of the influence of glaciers.

Thanks to the cold climate which, following the glacial period, many of the gold deposits have been preserved to the present day in their original form, so that they present an instructive example and traces of a geological period partially contemporary with man, who has even left indubitable traces of his presence in the form of arrow heads made of jasper and quartz, hammer heads, ornaments, coins, bones et cetera.

The following table gives comparative data for the general production of gold in Russia during the last ten years together with its value, and the production in Western and Eastern Siberia.

| Year. | Total production of gold in Russia. |                                | Value in roubles (gold). | I n c l u d i n g : |                                |                               |                     |                                |                               |
|-------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|       | Pouids.                             | Pouids.                        |                          | In Western Siberia. |                                | Per cent of total production. | In Eastern Siberia. |                                | Per cent of total production. |
|       |                                     |                                |                          | Pouids.             | Pouids.                        |                               | Pouids.             | Pouids.                        |                               |
| 1882  | 2,207                               | 10                             | 24,277,000               | 126                 | 30 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 5.26                          | 1,622               | 31                             | 73.52                         |
| 1883  | 2,182                               | 14 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 24,002,000               | 134                 | 6                              | 6.14                          | 1,554               | 12                             | 71.23                         |
| 1884  | 2,178                               | 12 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 23,958,000               | 131                 | 7                              | 6.01                          | 1,561               | 25 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 71.70                         |
| 1885  | 2,015                               | 22 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 22,165,000               | 134                 | 36 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 6.68                          | 1,349               | 13                             | 66.96                         |
| 1886  | 2,042                               | 4                              | 22,462,000               | 136                 | 22 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 6.68                          | 1,345               | 1                              | 65.86                         |
| 1887  | 2,128                               | 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 23,408,000               | 149                 | 28                             | 7.03                          | 1,328               | 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 62.41                         |
| 1888  | 2,146                               | 27                             | 23,606,000               | 154                 | 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 7.17                          | 1,326               | 1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 61.77                         |
| 1889  | 2,274                               | 19 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 25,014,000               | 169                 | 19 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 7.45                          | 1,462               | 9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 64.36                         |
| 1890  | 2,403                               | 25                             | 26,433,000               | 160                 | 39 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 6.69                          | 1,599               | 1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 66.52                         |
| 1891  | 2,386                               | 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 26,246,500               | 170                 | 28 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 7.15                          | 1,510               | 1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 63.32                         |

The number of men employed in the extraction of gold in Western and Eastern Siberia during the same period is shown in the following table.

| Year. | Number of miners. |                  |                   |
|-------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|       | Western Siberia.  | Eastern Siberia. | Total in Siberia. |
| 1882  | 6,653             | 26,768           | 33,431            |
| 1883  | 7,148             | 26,252           | 33,400            |
| 1884  | 8,094             | 27,441           | 35,535            |
| 1885  | 8,624             | 27,442           | 36,066            |
| 1886  | 9,158             | 25,593           | 34,751            |
| 1887  | 11,616            | 23,203           | 34,819            |
| 1888  | 11,460            | 24,803           | 36,263            |
| 1889  | 10,585            | 26,697           | 37,282            |
| 1890  | 9,512             | 28,242           | 37,754            |
| 1891  | 9,454             | 27,521           | 36,975            |

On comparing these two tables it is seen that although Eastern Siberia employs only three times as many men as Western Siberia yet its production is nine or ten times as great. This is due to the greater richness of the deposits worked in the former region. Owing to the dearness of provisions and forage, and consequently of labour and horses in Eastern Siberia, the exploitation of the poorer deposits is impossible with the methods now in use for treating the gold bearing sand.

When in 1829 the Siberian gold industry was made free to private individuals a great number of enterprising men and large capital found their way to this remote region. The gold miners became rich themselves and aided the development of the region with a generous hand, laying down roads to inaccessible places, establishing a steam navigation along the abundant Siberian rivers, and sacrificing considerable sums to the erection of national institutions, such as schools, churches and every kind of charitable and pious work. The development of the gold industry reflected itself upon the towns of Tomsk, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk, Chita, Nerchinsk and Blagoveschensk.

Beyond the 40,000 miners employed at the mines themselves, the Siberian gold industry gives occupation to a considerable population in the transport of goods to the mines and other auxiliary works. Indeed it indirectly aids the development of agriculture in the neighbouring agricultural districts and it presents a profitable market for their produce.

The extent of the sums acquired by the country from the gold industry is seen from the following example. During the three years 1887 to 1889, the wages of the men employed in the gold mines of the Olekminsk and Vitimsk systems amounted to 6,789,000 roubles, while the cost of the chief objects of consumption at those mines was 12,268,000 roubles. These figures give an excellent idea of how vast an amount of money the gold industry distributes over the entire region and how it supports its population, trade and industry.

Passing from these general data respecting the Siberian gold industry, its individual features according to the systems of the chief Siberian rivers may be considered.

In the vast basin of the Obi the gold industry has been established: 1. On the steppe land extremity of Siberia in the provinces of Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk, along the rivers belonging to the system of the left branch of the Obi-Irtysh system of the river Irtysh; 2. On the western side of the Kouznets Alatau in the Mariinsk region of the government of Tomsk. 3. In the Altai mining region; 4. On the eastern side of the Kouznets Alatau in the Achinsk region of the government of Yenisei.

Owing to the difference of the natural conditions in the different gold bearing regions, the modes and processes of extraction also differ. In the steppe region the mining is exclusively open workings, so that deposits with deep lying strata are not worked owing to the great expense of the timber required for supporting underground minings. Thanks to the warm climate the washing of the sand is carried on from April to October, that is, during about seven months. The workings are surrounded by a nomad Kirghiz and Cossacks population, who work in the mines partly for so much per cubic sagene of earth, and partly at so much per zolotnik of gold extracted, and besides this, they serve as the providers of provisions to the mines. Hence the gold industry in the steppe region is not hampered by great preliminary expenses. Moreover, the wages and living of the miners is far less in the steppe than

in the forest region, and therefore it is possible to exploit comparatively very poor deposits, in which the amount of gold does not in some cases exceed 8 doleys per hundred pounds, of sand, or 0.00002 per cent.

In the forest region which embraces the Altai mining region, the Mariinsk region of the government of Tomsk, and the Achinsk region of the government of Yenisei, the climate is more severe and the washing of the gold can only be carried on during five or at most six months. The population is more sparse and the conditions of the industry begin to acquire another aspect, more like that which predominated, in general, in Eastern Siberia.

In the Achinsk region the gold industry is concentrated at the sources of the Chulyma along the rivers Belaya, Chernaya and Sarala-Use.

In the Altai mining region the gold mines are exploited both by His Imperial Majesty's Cabinet and by private individuals.

The following table gives the number of gold mines worked and their yield during the last ten years both in the different provinces and in the various regions of the Obi system.

| Y e a r. | Akmolinsk province. |                                  | Semipalatinsk province. |                                   | Government of Tomsk. |                                   |                      |                                    |              |                                  |                     |                                   | Gov. of Yenisei.    |                |
|----------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
|          | Number of deposits. |                                  | Yield of gold.          |                                   | Mariinsk region.     |                                   | Altai mining region. |                                    |              |                                  | Achinsk region.     |                                   |                     |                |
|          | Pounds.             | Pounds.                          | Number of deposits.     | Yield of gold.                    | Number of deposits.  | Yield of gold.                    | Alluvial gold.       |                                    | Quartz gold. |                                  | Number of deposits. | Yield of gold.                    | Number of deposits. | Yield of gold. |
|          |                     |                                  |                         |                                   |                      |                                   | Pounds.              | Pounds.                            | Pounds.      | Pounds.                          |                     |                                   |                     |                |
| 1882     | 10                  | 2 24                             | 29                      | 11 7 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 71                   | 34 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 47                   | 74 6 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>   | 2            | 4 23 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 31                  | 22 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  |                     |                |
| 1883     | 12                  | 5 31                             | 31                      | 8 29 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 70                   | 38 23 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 50                   | 79 —                               | 2            | 3 9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 33                  | 17 16 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |                     |                |
| 1884     | 20                  | 7 37 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 27                      | 7 2 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>   | 86                   | 33 3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 54                   | 77 11                              | 2            | 4 28 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 40                  | 18 34 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |                     |                |
| 1885     | 29                  | 7 39 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 27                      | 6 16 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 95                   | 32 30 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 59                   | 82 39 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 2            | 4 31                             | 37                  | 19 15 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> |                     |                |
| 1886     | 28                  | 6 17                             | 26                      | 7 34 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 104                  | 36 29 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 56                   | 79 14 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 2            | 6 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 36                  | 17 21 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |                     |                |
| 1887     | 30                  | 6 19 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 32                      | 12 4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 116                  | 36 21 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 69                   | 87 36 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 2            | 6 27                             | 42                  | 18 9                              |                     |                |
| 1888     | 29                  | 7 14                             | 35                      | 14 25 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 112                  | 37 19 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 75                   | 88 1                               | 2            | 6 26 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 37                  | 20 29 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |                     |                |
| 1889     | 32                  | 4 28 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 38                      | 14 33 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 118                  | 40 25 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 75                   | 102 49 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 2            | 6 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 36                  | 23 13 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |                     |                |
| 1890     | 25                  | 2 19 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 37                      | 13 32 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 105                  | 33 25                             | 77                   | 105 6                              | 2            | 5 34                             | 35                  | 21 24                             |                     |                |
| 1891     | 25                  | 2 37 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 43                      | 16 25 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 103                  | 31 35                             | 77                   | 113 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 2            | 5 31                             | 33                  | 25 38                             |                     |                |

Thus the gold industry is very feebly developed in the Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk provinces. In the Mariinsk region the production of gold is subject to very slight fluctuations, notwithstanding the increased number of deposits under exploitation and the larger amount of gold bearing sand treated in them. This shows that the richer deposits have been exhausted and that the exploitation of the poorer can be carried on profitably owing to the

low price of labour and provisions at the gold mines of this region. The amount of gold obtained in the Altai region is constantly increasing owing to the gold bearing sands being of very uniform richness while the number of deposits worked is on the increase. This also proves that the stores of gold in the deposits of the Altai region are not yet exhausted. Gold quartz is worked at two mines in the Altai but the amount produced is still inconsiderable. During the last ten years the production of the Achinsk region has varied very slightly. Of all the gold deposits in the Obi system, those in the Mariinsk, Altai and Achinsk regions are the most profitable for exploitation, owing to their proximity to the railway; and there is reason for thinking that the extraction of gold will be further developed in these districts.

The following table gives the number of men employed at the gold mines during the last ten years.

| Year. | Akmolinsk province. | 'Semipalatinsk province. | Gov. of Tomsk.   |               | Gov. of Yenisei. |
|-------|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
|       |                     |                          | Mariinsk region. | Altai region. | Achinsk region.  |
| 1882  | 431                 | 1,785                    | 1,877            | 2,560         | 1,028            |
| 1883  | 884                 | 1,637                    | 2,053            | 2,577         | 922              |
| 1884  | 1,537               | 1,601                    | 2,093            | 2,863         | 825              |
| 1885  | 1,897               | 1,565                    | 2,068            | 3,094         | 857              |
| 1886  | 2,135               | 1,544                    | 2,203            | 3,274         | 876              |
| 1887  | 3,210               | 1,928                    | 2,490            | 3,988         | 1,055            |
| 1888  | 2,899               | 2,408                    | 2,185            | 3,968         | 916              |
| 1889  | 2,228               | 2,114                    | 2,137            | 4,070         | 935              |
| 1890  | 1,536               | 2,045                    | 1,890            | 3,931         | 1,061            |
| 1891  | 400                 | 2,688                    | 1,858            | 4,407         | 952              |

The great river province of the Yenisei comprises four gold bearing regions, the Minousinsk, Krasnoyarsk, Yeniseisk (which subdivides itself into two parts or systems, the northern and southern), and Nizhneoudinsk.

The Minousinsk region, where gold was first prospected for in 1832, enjoys a comparatively moderate climate, an abundance of pasture and corn, and yet the gold industry of this region develops very slowly. This is chiefly owing to the distance, 300 to 350 versts, of the deposits from the centres of population. The amount of gold produced in the Minousinsk district remains nearly stationary.

In the Krasnoyarsk region, where the exploitation of gold was started in 1847, only three deposits are worked at the present day. The amount of gold washed in 1884 was nearly six pounds, while in the remaining years it varied between one and four pounds.

In the Yeniseisk region the most important gold producing localities are the valleys of the rivers Sevaglikone, Ogne, Kalami and Enashimo, belonging to the system of the Podkamennaya Toungouska, and also of the Aktolika and Bangash belonging to the basin of the

Pita, all in the northern system; the basin of the river Ouderei which falls into the tributary of the Angara, the Kamenka and the basins of the rivers Bolshaya Mourozhnaya and Pita, all in the southern system. In the majority of instances the rivers of both systems have a rapid current owing to the sharpness of their fall. During the heavy spring rains, they rapidly become swollen and overflow their courses, and although, owing to the steepness of their beds, they do not overflow to any great extent, nevertheless they frequently cause great damage to the gold workings. On the other hand during the prolonged summer droughts some of them become so shallow that it is necessary to stop washing the sands.

The rivers in the Yenisei region are not navigable, with the exception of the lower portions of the Yenisei, Podkamenaya Toungouska and Bolshaia Pita. The more considerable tributaries of these rivers are only navigable to small boats and rafts.

The gold extracted in the Yeniseisk region is generally finely granular, tabular and, as it were, rubbed; a coarsely grained gold of high purity is found along the rivers Ogne and Enashimo.

In the northern system the thickness of the gold bearing deposits varies from two to eight feet, although there are some which are as much as 15, 20 and even 35 feet thick. In the southern system the thickness of the deposits generally varies between two and twelve feet. The superficial covering of peat is in both cases between 5 and 30 feet. The average richness of the gold bearing sand in the northern system is about 31 dolias of gold per hundred pouds, but in the southern system it is somewhat less. However, in both systems there are workings in which the quantity of gold reaches one zolotnik per poud.

In the Yeniseisk region the first deposits were discovered in the present southern system, along the rivers Ouderei and Mamona, in the year 1838. At that time the workings of the Birusinsk system, in the Nizhneoudinsk region of the government of Irkutsk were of great importance, owing to the abundance of gold they yielded. As however the newly discovered deposits in the Yeniseisk region were found to excel those of the Berusinsk system in richness, numerous prospecting expeditions were dispatched to this region, and in 1839 the deposits of the northern system were discovered in the valleys of the rivers Aktolik and Vangash, while in the beginning of the forties all the present gold districts were covered with claims, although their exploration is being carried on to the present day. In the Yeniseisk region, as everywhere, the richest deposits were discovered first, and therefore the yield of gold from this region attained its maximum soon after its discovery, and then began to gradually decline. By the amount of gold produced, the Yeniseisk deposits stand among the richest in Russia. In the first year after the gold washing was begun, and when only one mine was under exploitation, with 190 miners, the yield exceeded  $7\frac{1}{2}$  pouds of gold. Subsequently the number of mines, and the yield of gold increased year by year; the maximum yield coincides with the year 1847 when 1,212 pounds  $12\frac{1}{2}$  pounds of gold were produced by 12,100 miners. This amount formed about 65 per cent of the production in Russia during that year. After 1847 the amount of gold extracted began to lessen, notwithstanding the increased number of miners, which in 1854 amounted to 20,567, and also the increased number of mines and the quantity of sand washed therein. The exploitation of the gold no longer formed an attraction for large companies and gradually began to fall into the hands of small enterprises.



In 1882 the exploitation of veinous gold was started in the Yeniseisk region, but it develops very slowly, and as yet the production has never exceeded eight pouds, and in recent years has even been under one and one-half pouds.

The gold workings of the Nizhneoudinsk region of the government of Irkutsk and of the Kansk region of the government of Yeniseisk, are situated along the system of the river Birusa. Only the upper courses of this river pass through the Nizhneoudinsk region, after which it flows through the Kansk region of the government of Yeniseisk. At the present time these region occupy almost the last place among the Siberian gold producing regions, although formerly the Berusinsk system was among the richest in Eastern Siberia.

The first discovery of gold in the Birusinsk system was made in 1836. The richness of the deposits of this system attracted numerous prospecting parties, and already in 1839 the Kansk and Nizhneoudinsk regions yielded about 41<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> pouds of gold, out of a total of 48<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> pouds extracted in Eastern Siberia. The maximum yield of gold from these regions was in 1842 when it equaled 204 pouds 6 pounds, or about 20 per cent of the total production in Russia. Since then the production of gold in these regions has gradually decreased, and in some years has even fallen below 15 pouds. However this decrease should not be ascribed to the exhaustion of the mines but chiefly to the discoveries of gold in other systems, and there is reason for thinking that if more detailed explorations were made, and the exploitation of the deposits more scientifically carried out, then the Berusinsk system would once more stand to the fore.

The following table gives the production of the gold-bearing regions of the Yeniseisk system during the period 1882 to 1891.

| Y e a r. | Minousinsk region.  |         |                                | Krasnoyarsk region. |         |                                | Yeniseisk region.   |        |                                |                     |        |                                | Kansk and Nizhneoudinsk regions. |        |                                |
|----------|---------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|
|          | Number of workings. |         | Production of gold.            | Number of workings. |         | Production of gold.            | Northern system.    |        |                                | Southern system.    |        |                                | Number of workings.              |        | Production of gold.            |
|          | Pouds.              | Pounds. |                                | Pouds.              | Pounds. |                                | Number of workings. | Pouds. | Pounds.                        | Number of workings. | Pouds. | Pounds.                        | Number of workings.              | Pouds. |                                |
|          |                     |         | Pouds.                         |                     |         | Pounds.                        |                     |        |                                |                     |        |                                |                                  |        | Pouds.                         |
| 1882     | 41                  | 30      | 37 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 1                   | 2       | 1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 86                  | 95     | 36 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 134                 | 115    | 18 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 26                               | 17     | 31 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1883     | 41                  | 30      | 3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 3                   | 3       | 32                             | 95                  | 93     | 13 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 135                 | 125    | 30                             | 29                               | 22     | 14 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1884     | 42                  | 34      | 39 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 3                   | 5       | 38 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 89                  | 106    | 36 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 130                 | 126    | 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 33                               | 29     | 9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  |
| 1885     | 40                  | 32      | 13 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 2                   | 4       | 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 105                 | 106    | 21 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 149                 | 118    | 32 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 27                               | 27     | 23 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1886     | 41                  | 31      | 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 2                   | 4       | 6 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 91                  | 97     | 39 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 151                 | 115    | 26                             | 34                               | 22     | 4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  |
| 1887     | 41                  | 30      | 24 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 4                   | 2       | 34 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 110                 | 100    | 16 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 153                 | 125    | 27 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 31                               | 21     | 27 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1888     | 43                  | 32      | 2                              | 3                   | 1       | 29                             | 109                 | 97     | 19 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 145                 | 123    | 22 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 27                               | 23     | 22 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1889     | 46                  | 26      | 24 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 3                   | 2       | 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 104                 | 83     | 34                             | 148                 | 105    | 35 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 32                               | 28     | 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  |
| 1890     | 45                  | 28      | 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 3                   | 1       | 14                             | 113                 | 88     | 36                             | 143                 | 123    | 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 33                               | 24     | 33 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> |
| 1891     | 24                  | 34      | 16 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 3                   | 1       | 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 106                 | 78     | 5                              | 139                 | 117    | 3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 31                               | 24     | 18 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |

The number of men employed in the gold mines of the same regions is shown in the below table.

| Y e a r. | Minousinsk region. | Krasnoyarsk region. | Yeniseisk region. |                  | Kansk and Nizhneoudinsk regions. |
|----------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
|          |                    |                     | Northern system.  | Southern system. |                                  |
| 1882     | 1,122              | 60                  | 4,278             | 4,297            | 368                              |
| 1883     | 1,102              | 182                 | 4,447             | 4,618            | 591                              |
| 1884     | 917                | 163                 | 4,698             | 3,626            | 1,599                            |
| 1885     | 1,128              | 123                 | 4,533             | 4,989            | 1,078                            |
| 1886     | 1,167              | 138                 | 3,807             | 5,477            | 601                              |
| 1887     | 1,343              | 124                 | 3,624             | 4,750            | 543                              |
| 1888     | 1,379              | 51                  | 3,732             | 4,436            | 762                              |
| 1889     | 1,187              | 95                  | 3,883             | 4,440            | 1,332                            |
| 1890     | 1,242              | 85                  | 4,183             | 4,476            | 1,076                            |
| 1891     | 1,441              | 71                  | 3,376             | 4,408            | 1,089                            |

The Verkhneoudinsk region of the Transbaikal province is situated along the rivers flowing into Lake Baikal, and from it through the Angara into the Yenisei. The gold deposits of this region are situated in its south-eastern portion, near the Chinese frontier, along the tributaries of the river Chika, which falls into the river Selenga. These deposits lie in narrow valleys, surrounded by high mountains covered with forests. Although the number of deposits under exploitation is gradually increasing, still the yield of gold remains very limited.

The following data refer to the Verkhneoudinsk region.

| Y e a r. | Number of workings. | Production of gold. |                                | Number of mines. | Y e a r. | Number of workings. | Production of gold. |                                | Number of miners. |
|----------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|----------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
|          |                     | Pouds.              | Pounds.                        |                  |          |                     | Pouds.              | Pounds.                        |                   |
| 1882     | 12                  | 3                   | 14 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 285              | 1887     | 12                  | —                   | 32 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 186               |
| 1883     | 6                   | 3                   | 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 200              | 1888     | 15                  | 1                   | 20                             | 179               |
| 1884     | 9                   | 1                   | 36 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 245              | 1889     | 12                  | 3                   | 21 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 192               |
| 1885     | 9                   | 2                   | 31 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 235              | 1890     | 17                  | 2                   | 35 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 319               |
| 1886     | 11                  | —                   | 27                             | 211              | 1891     | 15                  | 4                   | 36 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 173               |

The gold workings belonging to the system of the river Lena are situated in the regions of Verkhholensk and Kirensk in the government of Irkutsk, in the region of Bargouzinsk in the Transbaikal province and in the region of Olekminsk in the province of Yakutsk. Although the upper courses of the Lena abound in gold deposits, they are generally poor, and therefore the number of deposits under exploitation and the amount of gold produced in the Verkhholensk and Kirensk regions is inconsiderable. The gold workings of the Bargouzinsk region are situated to the east of Lake Baikal along the upper courses of the river Vitima

which flows into Lena from the right side. Although during the last ten years the number of deposits under exploitation has more than doubled, yet the number of men employed has scarcely varied, and the amount of gold produced has, if anything, decreased.

Of all the above cited regions appertaining to the system of the Lena, the most important in respect to the yield of gold and number of men employed, is the Olekminsk region, situated in the south-western portion of the Yakutsk province. All the gold deposits of this region are included between 53 and 60° north latitude and between 130 and 138° east longitude from Paris, and are bounded: to east by the river Olekma, to the north and north-west by the river Lena, to the west and south-west by the river Vitima, and finally to the south by the Yablonovoy mountain chain, which is here the watershed of the tributaries of the Lena and Amour. This region is intersected in all directions by the spurs of the Mouisk and Yablonovoy mountains, and has quite an Alpine character. One of the chief spurs of the Mouisk mountains extends parallel to the river Vitima and this divides the Olekminsk region into two systems, the Vitimsk and the Olekminsk. The Vitimsk system lies to the north-east of Irkutsk at a distance of 1,700 versts from it. The Olekminsk system extends in the same direction still further across the watershed of the Lena and Vitima, so that in reality this watershed forms the true boundary between the two systems. Both systems are at an equal altitude above the level of the sea, nor is there any geological difference between them, as the same rocks predominate in both. The gold deposits, known up to the present time, almost blend into one another and the distance across the intermediate mountain chain does not exceed fifteen versts.

Among the rivers along which the gold deposits of the Vitimsk system are situated, the river Bodaibo deserves particular attention, as all its system is exceedingly rich in gold, and the richest deposits are situated over a comparatively small area in this system. There are also rich deposits near the upper courses of the gold bearing tributaries of the Vitima, beyond the watershed along the tributaries of the rivers flowing into the Lena. Among the tributaries of the Lena which water the Olekminsk system, the most noteworthy are the systems of the Great and Little Patomo; and of the tributaries of the Olekma, the most notable are the rivulets of Zhuya, Bogolonak, Khomolkho and Vacha.

The gold obtained from the Olekminsk-Vitimsk deposits is distinguished for the size of its grains, so that nuggets of  $\frac{1}{4}$  pound and more in weight are frequently found. Besides this, the gold from these deposits is distinguished for its somewhat regular crystalline form. With respect to the mode of occurrence of the gold bearing strata, it should be mentioned that the gold of the Olekminsk-Vitimsk deposits has the peculiarity of being distributed in alluvial deposits in two, and not unfrequently even in three layers. The average richness of the gold bearing sands during recent years has been: in the Olekminsk system from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $1\frac{3}{4}$  zolotniks, and in the Vitimsk system from 3 to  $4\frac{3}{4}$  zolotniks per 100 pounds of sand. However, in some workings the amount of gold is as much as  $5\frac{1}{2}$  zolotniks and more per 100 pounds of sand. The thickness of the gold veins is from 2 to 15 feet and the thickness of the superincumbent dirt or peat varies between half a sagene to 20 sages. The largest workings are chiefly concentrated in the deposits situated at a greater depth below the surface; as in the Olekminsk and Vitimsk systems these deposits are the richest.

The greater part of the peat and gold bearing sand is in a perpetually frozen state, but sometimes the gold bearing rock stuff is unfrozen, and lastly a combination of the one and the other is sometimes met with, but this phenomena has not been sufficiently investigated for it to serve as a guide in the exploitation of the deposits in which it occurs. There are frequent instances where the frozen state of the soil is taken advantage of for sinking shafts in those deposits which lie at some depth and which are exploited by underground workings.

The gold workings of the Vitimsk and Olekmink systems have their stations or chief depots on the banks of the Lena near the mouths of the river Vitima. The workings of the Olekmink system are situated at a distance of about 350 versts from the depots, and vehicular communication can only be carried on in the winter over the ice; and in summer the goods have to be transported on the backs of camels. For working, the Vitimsk system is much more advantageously situated, as in summer there is a steamer communication from the mouth of the Vitima to a distance of 300 versts up the river Bodaibo, where the gold workings of this system begin; moreover the mines are connected by a carriage road. The miners of the Olekmink diggings are chiefly hired from Irkutsk, whence also all the provisions and articles necessary for the workings and miners are bought.

Notwithstanding the comparative infancy of the gold industry in those regions, and the difficulties which are encountered in the severity of the climate, dearness of labour and the distance from any inhabited place, still the production of gold has developed rapidly, and in the Olekmink region, reached a maximum of 939 pouds in 1880; indeed since 1868 this region has stood first among all the gold regions of Siberia in respect to its yield of precious metal.

The following table gives the production of the gold regions belonging to the Lena system, during the last ten years.

| Year. | Verkholsk and Kirensk regions. |                     |                                | Bargouzinsk regions. |                     |                                | Olekmink region.    |                     |                                |
|-------|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
|       | Number of workings.            | Production of gold. |                                | Number of workings.  | Production of gold. |                                | Number of workings. | Production of gold. |                                |
|       |                                | Pouds.              | Pounds.                        |                      | Pouds.              | Pounds.                        |                     | Pouds.              | Pounds.                        |
| 1882  | 1                              | —                   | 4                              | 25                   | 34                  | 1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  | 62                  | 759                 | 1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  |
| 1883  | 1                              | —                   | 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 24                   | 29                  | 18 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 58                  | 686                 | 5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  |
| 1884  | 2                              | —                   | 4                              | 24                   | 24                  | 38 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 57                  | 704                 | 13                             |
| 1885  | 2                              | —                   | 14 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 24                   | 24                  | 15 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 65                  | 538                 | 39                             |
| 1886  | 2                              | 1                   | 18                             | 37                   | 25                  | 10                             | 64                  | 466                 | 32 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1887  | 2                              | —                   | 22 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 29                   | 34                  | 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 75                  | 451                 | 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  |
| 1888  | 4                              | 3                   | 14 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 41                   | 25                  | 9 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 78                  | 464                 | 3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  |
| 1889  | 5                              | 7                   | 36                             | 55                   | 34                  | 26 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 77                  | 495                 | 29 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1890  | 4                              | 4                   | 19                             | 60                   | 31                  | 8 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 79                  | 575                 | 33 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> |
| 1891  | 4                              | 7                   | 34                             | 64                   | 27                  | 35                             | 87                  | 545                 | 27 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> |

The following table gives the number of miners employed in these regions during the same period.

| Y e a r s. | Verkholensk and Kirensk region. | Bargouzinsk region. | Olekminsk region. | Y e a r s. | Verkholensk and Kirensk region. | Bargouzinsk region. | Olekminsk region. |
|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1882       | 10                              | 940                 | 4,558             | 1887       | 20                              | 862                 | 5,073             |
| 1883       | 6                               | 839                 | 3,529             | 1888       | 21                              | 1,225               | 5,638             |
| 1884       | 20                              | 482                 | 5,421             | 1889       | 199                             | 1,036               | 5,880             |
| 1885       | 11                              | 789                 | 5,278             | 1890       | 120                             | 995                 | 6,464             |
| 1886       | 53                              | 643                 | 4,910             | 1891       | 119                             | 738                 | 6,772             |

In 1889 the workings of both systems of the Olekminsk region employed 2,340 horses and 2,100 reindeer. The native Tunguz and Yakuts transport the building timber and pit props required at the mines, by reindeer. Passing now to a review of the gold deposits in the vast river province of the Amour, it should be mentioned that the Nerchinsk mining region is in the uppermost courses of this system, along the tributaries of the Shilka and Argouua. The gold deposits of the Nerchinsk region are subdivided into four administrative regions: the Chitinsk, Akshinsk, Nerchinsk and the Nerchinsk metallurgical regions, situated between 128 and 137° east longitude and 49 and 53° north latitude. Veinous gold was discovered in the Nerchinsk region so far back as 1777, but owing to the poorness of the ore it was not worked. In 1838 promising alluvial deposits were discovered in the valley of the river Kara, the left hand tributary of the Shilka. These workings which are exploited to the present day, long remained the only ones of any consideration in the district. In 1853 the Shakhtalinsk deposit was opened out, and in 1865 the deposits along the rivulet Chernaya Ougruma were discovered; the latter remain the richest to the present time. Since 1865 when the Nerchinsk region was opened to private enterprise, the production of gold has gradually increased. At present, gold is extracted in the eastern portion of the Transbaikal province, in the Akshinsk region along the systems of the rivers Onon, Ingoda and Nercha, and in the Nerchinsk region along the systems of the rivers Ougruma, Gazimoura, Ounda, Nercha and Shilka. Veinous gold is also worked in the Chitinsk and Akshinsk regions. The alluvial deposits of the Amour and Littoral provinces are situated in the basins of the left tributaries of the Amour, within an area lying approximately between 52 and 56° north latitude and 120 to 138° east longitude from Paris.

From their geographical position the gold deposits of the Amour may be divided into several groups, lying in the following order from west to east. The gold bearing district of the first group is situated on the watershed between the Amour and Zea, in the neighbourhood of Alhazine at a distance of 100 versts from the Amour. The deposits of this group were the first discovered in the Amour province, in 1866, by the well known mining engineer Anosov, who during 12 years endured every privation in an untiring exploration

of the mineral wealth of the region of the Amour. At that time this region was entirely unknown to industry, and was at a distance of 500 versts from the inhabited localities of the Transbaikal province. During the first year, 1868, following the institution of gold workings in this district, 50 pounds of gold were extracted and the average richness of the deposits was found to be over three zolotniks per hundred pounds of sand. The second group of deposits in the gold bearing region, is comprised by the tributaries of the rivers Gilui and Brianta which fall into the river Zea from the right side. This group comprises some of the richest deposits now known, and was also discovered by Anosov. The exploitation of the gold deposits in this district, where over the whole area between the rivers Gilui and Brianta there is no stream which is not in some degree gold bearing, was begun in 1876, and in 1883 a vein deposit was also discovered.

The third group of deposits is situated along the system of the river Selendzha, the left tributary of the river Zea. In 1874 a whole series of deposits was discovered here after the indication of Anosov. The fourth group, comprising the system of the upper courses of the river Niman, the right tributary of the river Boureya, was also discovered after the indication of Anosov, in 1875. A series of deposits was disclosed here at a distance of six hundred versts from the junction of the Boureya and Amour. These deposits proved to be exceedingly rich in gold, and the fame of their discovery soon penetrated into industrial spheres and attracted numerous prospecting parties to this perfectly desert region. The same mountain chain that gives rise to the Selendzha and Niman, also forms the source, only on its eastern side in the Littoral province, of the river Amgoun which falls into the Amour from the left at about 90 versts distance from its mouth. In 1868, the fifth and most eastern group of the deposits of the Amour gold bearing region, was discovered in the system of the river Amgoun. The gold bearing beds in the Amour deposits are under very favourable conditions for exploitation. They lie at an inconsiderable depth; the average thickness of the peat is about one sagene and the thickness of the gold bearing bed, half a sagene. Hence all the deposits are exploited by open workings, and only in certain of those along the river Niman, where the thickness of the peat exceed 20 feet and of the gold bearing bed 9 feet, are underground minings carried on. Besides the actual localities belonging to the system of the Amour within the borders of the Littoral province in its southern portion, numerous gold deposits have been found in many parts of the continent and also on the island of Askolda, near Vladivostok, where the gold bearing seam forms the bottom of the sea and whence a gold bearing sand is extracted.

The gold workings of all the above cited groups of the Amour system, have their depot stations on the Amour, Zea, Boureya and Amgoun. There is a steamboat communication on the three last named rivers, for a distance up to 400 versts from their mouths. The remaining distance of 200 to 400 versts is partly traversed in boats and partly on horseback along paths leading through the midst of the taiga to the gold workings. In winter only is there the possibility of a more convenient communication between the mines and their depot stations, whence they obtain all their provisions in the winter. Owing to this circumstance the cost of labour along the system of the Zea amounts from 1,000 to 1,200 roubles per head, and on the Niman it even comes to 1,500 and 1,900 roubles. Notwith-

standing these very disadvantageous economic conditions the gold workings of the Amour province are gradually enlarging their production, and moreover the number of deposits under exploitation is constantly increasing. The following table gives the production and number of workings in the Amour river system; all the workings in the Transbaikal province belonging to this system, being grouped under the general designation of the deposits of the Nerchinsk region.

| Year. | Nerchinsk region.   |                     |                                | Amour province.     |                     |                                | Littoral province.  |                     |                                |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
|       | Number of workings. | Production of gold. |                                | Number of workings. | Production of gold. |                                | Number of workings. | Production of gold. |                                |
|       |                     | Pounds.             | Pounds.                        |                     | Pounds.             | Pounds.                        |                     | Pounds.             | Pounds.                        |
| 1882  | 48                  | 271                 | 22 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 15                  | 254                 | 16 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 3                   | 16                  | 2 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  |
| 1883  | 53                  | 271                 | 16 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 19                  | 248                 | 38 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 3                   | 22                  | 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>  |
| 1884  | 52                  | 259                 | 30 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 22                  | 323                 | 24 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 2                   | 20                  | 32 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1885  | 51                  | 149                 | 24 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 22                  | 302                 | 13 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 4                   | 21                  | 37 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1886  | 51                  | 204                 | 28 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 19                  | 345                 | 15 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 2                   | 11                  | 29 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> |
| 1887  | 57                  | 179                 | 15 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 21                  | 355                 | 22 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 3                   | 6                   | 33 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> |
| 1888  | 57                  | 146                 | 12 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 22                  | 377                 | 18 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 4                   | 8                   | 38 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1889  | 74                  | 183                 | 25 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 34                  | 458                 | 18 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 3                   | 7                   | 14                             |
| 1890  | 79                  | 204                 | 1                              | 51                  | 485                 | 25 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 3                   | 6                   | 38 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> |
| 1891  | 83                  | 198                 | <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>    | 47                  | 427                 | 22 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 6                   | 16                  | 35 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> |

During the same period the following number of men were employed at the workings of these several localities.

| Year. | Nerchinsk region. | Amour province. | Littoral province. | Year. | Nerchinsk region. | Amour province. | Littoral province. |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1882  | 7,225             | 2,307           | 290                | 1887  | 4,481             | 1,132           | 140                |
| 1883  | 6,773             | 2,969           | 350                | 1888  | 4,010             | 2,226           | 203                |
| 1884  | 6,796             | 2,492           | 307                | 1889  | 4,642             | 2,701           | 175                |
| 1885  | 5,683             | 2,445           | 293                | 1890  | 5,174             | 2,727           | 319                |
| 1886  | 5,560             | 1,997           | 148                | 1891  | 4,431             | 3,400           | 551                |

The method of exploitation and in general the technical side of the gold industry depends upon whether the gold is extracted from alluvial or veinous deposits. In the alluvial

deposits the superficial layer consists of an alluvium known as peat. The thickness of this peat varies considerably and the relation between the thickness of the peat and that of the auriferous alluvium determines the system of working followed for extracting the gold. Before entering upon the actual exploitation of the auriferous beds, exploratory workings are conducted for determining the thickness of these beds and their richness in gold. In those parts of Siberia where the soil is unfrozen, the exploration of the deposit is generally made in the winter by means of pits sunk into the frozen ground. The method adopted is as follows: in autumn the pits are laid out and sunk to the water level, when the work is stopped and the pits left open for a certain number of days depending upon the degree of cold, the depth of the pit and the kind of soil. The pits are carefully protected from snow. When the pit has sufficiently frozen through, a wood fire is lighted at the bottom and when the bottom of the pit has thawed to a depth of about one foot, the thawed layer is easily removed with a pick and shovel. Notwithstanding the severe frosts, the freezing of the pits can only be carried on to a depth of four sagues. In those localities where the soil is frozen the exploratory pits do not present such difficulties, as they are made in hard ground and without the inflow of water. The specimens of the ground taken for assay from the bottom of the pit are washed in huddles in warm winter quarters erected upon the workings. The assays are taken at about each half foot through the thickness of the deposit.

In the Yeniseisk region the winter exploring parties consist of five men with one overseer, and cost about three thousand roubles. Such a party is able to sink about 150 pits three sagues deep. The removal of the peat is carried on during the autumn or winter, or else simultaneously with the extraction of the sand, or else slightly in advance of it. If the peat be removed in the autumn or winter a thin layer is left over the gold bearing alluvium to protect it against the influence of the severe frosts, and then this layer is removed in the spring. Sometimes advantage is taken of the spring floods, to wash away a portion of the peat. Only in a few, rare instances is the peat, containing a very small amount of gold, washed throughout its whole extent; as a rule it is carried away and thrown aside. The extraction of the auriferous sand is conducted in the simplest manner possible by means of picks crowbars and shovels. However, in the Olekminsk region the use of explosives in the mining works is yearly increasing, and the annual consumption of dynamite at the gold workings of this region amounts to about a thousand pounds. The auriferous sand is transported to the washing machines in two-wheeled carts drawn by horses, along a natural road or along a road made of logs. In some of the gold regions the transport at certain workings is done in trucks along a tram line. The rare application of mechanical motors and appliances is frequently made a subject of reproach to the Siberian gold workers, but it is necessary to remember not only the situation of the workings in the most remote localities, void of any road capable of transporting heavy weights, but also the entire absence of any mechanical machine or other industrial works in Siberia which could furnish the gold workings with the requisite tools, mechanism, machines or appliances. The carriage of such articles from the Urals is exceedingly expensive and sometimes doubles and triples their cost. Nevertheless, at some of the workings in the Olekminsk region and Amour province, there is a comparatively large application of mechanical appliances in the place of hand labour. This is particularly observable in the workings of



the Amour system, where there are large gold mining companies with sufficient capital at their disposal. Moreover, at many of the workings in the Olekminsk region the sand, gravel and peat is raised and transported by means of chain gear along a tram line. But it should be observed that if tram lines, transport by endless steel ropes, and even Lartig roads are met with in these regions, it is chiefly owing to the extreme dearness of horses and their feed.

The extraction of the auriferous sand is carried on simultaneously with the washing; but in underground mines the sand is prepared for washing in the winter. Experiments made on the application of the hydraulic method of exploitation have not been successful, and there is not much chance of this method being ultimately adopted in the Siberian gold workings, owing to the irregularity of the distribution of the gold bearing properties, which renders it impossible to erect large water reservoirs and hence of having a sufficient pressure of water, without which the hydraulic process is impracticable. The motive power required for the machines used in the extraction of the gold is generally furnished by overshot water wheels. The water is led to the washing machines either by canals or wooden conduits called *splotka*. The water supply is generally very well constructed and the timber which supports the conduits, in places attains 40 and 50 feet and is constructed with especial lightness and strength. The supply of water to the canals and conduits is generally done by partially damming the streams, and there is no need of accumulating the water in reservoir ponds, as there is an abundance of running water almost everywhere. Portable engines are frequently used at the gold mines of the Olekminsk region and of the system of the Amour. These engines are used when there is not sufficient water for the hydraulic motors.

At the present time in Siberia, the washing of the auriferous sand on a large scale is chiefly done in barrels, and only very clayey sand is treated in pans. In rare instances under particularly favourable conditions, when the profile of the soil is sufficiently inclined and the sand easily washed, it is excavated by hand and cast into a trough in which it is washed. This method, known as the Pakoulevsk process, is a modification of the American sluice process. Mr K. Koulibin, mining engineer, has recently introduced the sluice method of washing in the Urals, and he has modified Wooldear's system to suit the local conditions of Siberia, a system originally projected for the hydraulic process. This class of washing appliances are coming into use in Siberia where they are known as *koulibinki*

The first machines used in Siberia for washing the auriferous sands, consisted of pans and wooden barrels with iron fixings inside. The first pans and barrels washed from 3,000 to 5,000 pounds of sand per day; but when the gold industry developed they proved insufficient and therefore their dimensions were enlarged and their construction perfected. All the barrels now used in Siberia belong to one type and only differ in their dimensions. Each barrel consists of a conical seive with one-half inch meshes. These orifices are of equal size down the whole length of the barrel and are distributed in a chess board fashion. The barrel is made of boiler plate iron about one-fourth inch thick. The inside fitting of the barrels generally consists of iron bands placed edgewise. The barrels are revolved, by a special gear put into motion by hydraulic motors or portable engines. The dimensions of the barrels vary from 10 to 17 feet in length. The smaller diameters vary from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet and the larger, from 4 to 7 feet. Below the barrels

there is an inclined plane, whose upper portion is divided by longitudinal beams into several parts on which there are transversal riffles for retaining the gold.

Besides this, other arrangements such as brushwood or cloth are placed upon the inclined plane, for retaining the finer particles of gold. The length of this inclined plane or sluice is from 30 to 40 feet and it is generally made with a rather steep incline. The water for washing the sand is introduced into the barrel by means of several hoses, sometimes fourteen in number, which direct the water into various parts of the barrel. The water and inside fitting of the barrel grind the sand together in the barrel, the gravel passes only through the wide end, and the slime, through the orifices of the barrel into the sluice.

The washed sand and gravel, the so-called tailings fall through special trapdoors into carts or trucks and are dumped on the waste mounds. The barrel machines are made single or double. At the present time, one barrel can wash from forty to fifty thousand pounds of light sand or twenty-five to thirty thousand pounds of pasty, clayey sand per day. The gold is collected from the sluices twice a day, and either undergoes a preliminary concentration on so-called «Americans» or else goes straight to the buddles where it is washed free from all foreign matter. The more pasty sands cannot be satisfactorily washed in barrels, and therefore other arrangements are employed in their treatment, the most common being a pan from 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  to 16 feet in diameter having an edge one foot high and covered with a sieve with holes from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch in diameter. The sand thrown on the sieve is rubbed by several revolving rows of iron shoes, and washed with water. Under the combined action of the shoes and stream of water, the sand is rubbed together and the finer particles pass through the sieve and fall upon a sluice in the same manner as with the barrels. The gravel left upon the sieve is let through a special orifice from time to time. About fifteen to twenty thousand pounds of sand can be washed on these pans per day. In both the barrel and pan machines a small quantity of mercury is always supplied near the head of the sluice in order to collect the small particles of gold.

The koulbinka consists of a system of two parallel sluices, on which the sand is washed by its motion in a current of water. The sand and waters enter the chief sluice together. The width of this sluice varies from 2 to 3 feet, according to the amount of water and the extent of the washing; it has an inclination of 5 to 7 inches per sagene. The bottom of the sluice is entirely covered with an iron grating, which assists the washing of the sand and arrests the gold, amalgam and schlich. Transversal cuts five inches wide and covered with an iron sieve with interstices of one inch between the bars, are made along the length of the sluice at distances of 12 to 14 feet. The fine gravel and water fall through these sieves and pass along a small inclined conduit into the second sluice, which is parallel to the first but at a lower level. This sluice is covered with a wooden grating for retaining the gold and amalgam. At its head, this sluice is from 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  to 2 feet wide, and it has a uniform inclination of 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches per sagene. This second sluice widens out somewhat towards the bottom, as the amount of sand falling through the cross cuts in the first sluice increases. The first sluice on the contrary is made wider towards the head. In both sluices, a fresh supply of water can be added if required according to the state of the division of the sand. The first sluice terminates in a sieve inclined at 45 degrees over which the coarse gravel rolls into a

hopper, whence it is cast into trucks or carts and carried to the dump. The smaller particles fall through this sieve on the second sluice which here bends underneath the first sluice. The second sluice terminates in a kind of rake arrangement for collecting the fine-washed gravel. The chief condition required in this mode of washing is a sufficient supply of water.

With respect to veinous or quartz gold in Siberia, it is only extracted in the Yeniseisk region, in very small quantities; in the Altai in the exploitation of the silver ores from the Zyrianovsk and Riddersk mines, and in the Transbaikal province, where three deposits are now worked, giving a yearly yield of 12 to 17 pounds per year. The gold ores extracted from these deposits are crushed in stamps and washed in sluices covered with amalgamated copper sheets; the extraction of the gold is extremely imperfect and a large amount is lost. As a portion of the gold is in a state of chemical combination, some experiments were made in 1885 to apply Mounktells process for the treatment of the gold ores at one of the deposits in the Transbaikal province; but they were not successful.

In general, one of the chief hinderances to the development of the exploitation of veinous gold ores in Siberia, is the absence of mechanical works where the necessary machines could be constructed and repaired, as at present such machines have to be brought from the Urals at a great cost. An extended application of the wet chlorine methods of treatment in Siberia, is hindered by the cost of the materials requisite for the production of chlorine from bleaching powder. Apparently the extraction of gold by means of electrolysis would be more profitable in Siberia, as the use of turbines which is already beginning at the gold mines would give the possibility of having a mechanical motor during the whole year and of thus treating a sufficient amount of ore to bring in a profit.

The exploitation of gold over the whole of Russia is carried on upon the basis of the statute of the private gold industry, published in 1870. According to this statute, the gold miners working upon proprietary lands pay a tax upon the yield of gold to the Government, while those working upon State lands or lands belonging to His Majesty's Cabinet, pay an extra royalty to the Government or the Cabinet for the land covered by their workings. The tax upon the yield of gold is levied on the amount of pure gold and silver separately present in the unrefined metal. The gold miners in the Olekminsk region, as the richest, pay a 10 per cent tax and 10 roubles royalty per dessiatine of government land occupied by the workings; in the province of the Amour there is a 5 per cent tax and 5 roubles per dessiatine; in all the remaining parts of Siberia and in European Russia, there is a 3 per cent tax and a rental of 1 rouble per dessiatine per year.

The gold workings on the lands belonging to His Majesty's Cabinet are divided into three classes according to their yield, and they pay a royalty from 5 to 15 per cent to the Cabinet and a rental of 15 kopecks per sagene length of the workings.

All the schlich gold obtained by private individuals in Siberia has to be sent by them to the Government smelting houses, of which there are two, one for Western Siberia at Tomsk, and one for Eastern Siberia at Irkutsk. Besides this, His Majesty's Cabinet, under whose jurisdiction are the Altai and Nerchinsk works, has its own laboratory for the treatment of precious metals. The gold is smelted at the smelting house and its degree of purity determined

by assay. The metal is forwarded to the St. Petersburg Mint, and the gold merchants are given bills by which they obtain gold or silver coin or gold ingots.

### Silver, lead and copper.

Siberia was once inhabited by a people, who according to the Russian legends, were called Chud (wonder men). It is not known when this people lived, but the chief monuments of their former existence are ancient mines, chiefly with open diggings, only in rare instances, underground workings. The antiquity of these works is seen from the fact that all the instruments which have been found in them are made either of copper or hard stone, which leads to the supposition that this people was entirely unacquainted with iron. The Chud mines, as these ancient workings are called, guided the Russian pioneers in their search for metalliferous deposits, and at first, all the workings were begun in those localities where the Chud had formerly extracted their silver, lead or copper.

In Western Siberia the numerous remains of Chud mines found on the Altai and its very name of «altai» which means the «gold mountains» indicate their richness in metals. The first efforts made by the Russians to exploit these riches belong to the close of the XVIII century but, strictly speaking, the mining industry of the Altai was placed upon a firm footing at the beginning of the XVIII century by Akinfia Demidov the son of the Tula blacksmith Nikita Demidov (Antoufiev). In 1723 some Russian hunters found the remains of ancient scoria in the old waste heaps of Chud workings, near lake Kolyvan in the Biisk region, and mentioned this fact to Demidov. The ore deposits discovered in this locality proved to be particularly rich in copper and hence Demidov founded the first copper smelting works in the Altai, as early as 1726. He called these works the Kolyvano Voskresensk works. In 1739 he erected the Barnaoulsk works, which subsequently, in 1771, became the town of Barnaoul and became the administrative centre of all the works of the Altai region. In 1744 Demidov erected a third work in the present Semipalatinsk province on the borders of the Altai region.

In 1735 Demidov discovered the Zmeinogorodsk mine, but it was left unnoticed as the amount of copper in it proved inconsiderable. Soon afterwards however, namely in 1742, rich argentiferous lead ores were found in the Zmein mountains, from which Demidov in 1744 and 1745 obtained 2 pouds 25<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> pounds of silver. Subsequently, by an Imperial ukaz of the 15th May, 1747, all the mines and works of the Altai passed into the hands of His Majesty's Cabinet.

From that time the mining industry of the Altai made rapid progress. The discovery and laying out of new mines continued to the close of the XVIII century. The following were the chief of these mines: the Cherepanovsk in 1781, the Salairsk in 1781, the Riddersk in 1784, and the extremely rich Zyrianovsk mine in 1791. The following works were erected by the Cabinet: the Pavlovsk in 1763, the Souzounsk in 1764, the Tomsk in 1770, the Loktevsk in 1771, the Aleisk in 1774, and the Ekaterininsk, afterwards called the Gavrilovsk, in 1793. Two more works were erected in the present century, the Zmееvsk in 1804,

and the Gourevsk in 1816. Nearly all the works in the Altai are silver smelting works, the only exceptions being the Tomsk and Gourevsk iron works and the Souzounsk works which smelt copper as well as silver. According to their geographical position all the ore deposits of the Altai mining region may be divided into two independent groups. The first of these groups, the so-called Zmeinogorsk region, lies in the southern portion of the Altai region, in the systems of the rivers Obi and Irtysh; and the second or Salairsk region lies at the north-eastern extremity of the Altai region in the system of the river Toma. The most important difference in the conditions of these two groups is that the works of Zmeinogorsk region exclusively employ charcoal fuel, while those of the Salairsk region being in the near neighbourhood of the Kouznetsk coal basin, work with mineral fuel.

The mountains which contain the ore deposits in the Zmeinogorsk region belong to the branches of the Sayansk mountains; while those in the Salairsk region belong to the branches of the Altai mountains. They generally have the appearance of rounded volcanoes, without any rocky peaks. As a rule the height of these mountains does not exceed 4,000 to 4,500 feet. The predominating rock in these mountains is clay slate, and are more rarely crystalline schists, upheaved by porphyries, which most likely played an important part in the formation of the ore deposits. At the foot of the ore bearing mountains there are strata of sedimentary formations of different periods consisting of slates, limestones and sandstones. The ore deposits belong to two classes, veins and stock works. All the vein deposits bear the general character of steeply inclined, short and thick veins. They generally occur on the borders of the junction of the clay slates with felsite porphyries. The vein deposits of the Salairsk mountains are accompanied by veins of quartose felspar porphyries which in their zone rise to the formation of ore bearing cavities. As a rule, stock works are rare in the Altai, and are only known for the copper deposits and then they are not of great extent.

As many as eight hundred deposits of metallic ores are known in the Altai mining region. Altogether however only about five hundred mines have been exploited, out of which only eight silver and two copper mines are now worked. The silver ores contain a smaller or larger amount of various compounds of copper, lead, zinc and iron, which modify the external appearance, properties and richness of the ores; thus as a rule, those ores which are rich in lead or copper are poor in silver. The copper ores have the most uniform composition. Gold is found in only two of the silver mines, the Zyrianovsk and the Ridersk, and is distributed in a very variable extent throughout the deposit. Generally it appears in dependence upon a decrease in the amount of silver and other metals and occurs sparingly in ore bearing quartz in poor ferruginous silver ores. The metalliferous ores are either ochre or pyritic ores. The ochre ores occur in the upper level of the deposits and were formerly the chief objects of exploitation. As they descend to a greater depth, the ochre ores gradually change into pyritic ores. All the Altai mines, at their greatest depth of 70 to 100 sagenes, pass into a zone of transition of the ochre into pyritic ores, and hence the ore is exceedingly variable in its composition and richness in metal. The ochre ores are generally richer than the pyritic and this distinction is most evident in the case of silver ores; the transition of the ochre into pyritic ores generally has an extremely unfavourable effect upon the richness of the ore in silver and lead; besides which the smelting of the ores becomes much more difficult. For

this reason the existing mines are not in a position to yield the same amount of metal as formerly.

The amount of silver and lead in the ores is subject to great fluctuations. In the ochre ores the amount of silver varies from  $\frac{1}{8}$  to 10 zolotniks per pound of ore, and the amount of lead from 6 to 12 pounds per pound of ore, or 15 to 30 per cent. The pyritic ores are very much poorer. The amount of copper in the ores, smelted at the Souzounsk works, is from 5 to 10 per cent. Very many of the silver mines are accounted quite exhausted and therefore their exploitation has been entirely stopped. Among these it is impossible to avoid mentioning the Zmeinogorsk mine, which for a period of some seventy years yielded over 50,000 pounds of silver. Other mines were worked for a much shorter period and after giving several thousand pounds of silver were found to be exhausted.

At the present time the most productive mines are the Zyrianovsk in the Zmeinogorsk region and the Salairsk mines in another portion of the Altai region. The first named now yields about 500,000 pounds of ore, and the latter which, during the eighties, yielded from 700,000 to one million pounds of ore, in 1891 gave only 395,400 pounds. The Zyrianovsk deposit is now considered the most productive of all the deposits of the Altai. It lies in the south-eastern portion of the region on the river Maslianka, 12 versts distant from the left bank of the river Boukhtarma and 70 versts from the river Irtysh. The Zyrianovsk deposit is about 340 versts from the nearest silver smelting works, the Zmeievsk works. The Zyrianovsk deposit has yielded more than 45 million pounds of assorted ore containing over 45,000 pounds of silver and over 2,500,000 pounds of lead.

The Salairsk deposits, which are now exploited by two mines, the Salairsk 1st and Salairsk 2nd, are very thick and extensive and guarantee a supply of ore for smelting for a very long time, but the ores of these deposits are poor in silver. Only two copper mines are now in work, the Sougatovsk and the Chudak. These mines are situated in the southern portion of the region, not far from the Irtysh; but at a distance of 400 versts from the Souzounsk copper smelting works. At the Sougatovsk mine, besides ore, a cement copper is obtained from the mine waters. The ores of the Zmeinogorsk region were smelted at four works, the Barnaoulsk, the Pavlovsk, the Loktevska and the Zmeievsk, but the first three of these are now closed. The Salairsk region contains the Gavrilovsk silver smelting works.

The statistics respecting the amount of silver smelted at the Altai works, show that at the beginning of the present century over a thousand pounds of this metal were annually smelted during a period of many years. Such was the position of the works at the time of the liberation of the serfs, an event which in 1862 produced a complete revolution in the economic order of the country, and changed the conditions of the mining industry in this poorly populated region. During the first years following the liberation of the serfs, the production of the Altai works remained almost as before, thanks to the energetic production of rich ores from previously prepared workings in the Zyrianovsk and Talovsk deposits. The increased price of labour led to a considerable reduction in the amount of preparatory and exploratory diggings, which had the necessary consequence of gradually decreasing the stores of ore and of subsequently reducing its actual production. The abolition of obligatory labour not only raised the wages at the mines, but also considerably increased the cost of transporting the ore, and this

clearly proved the disadvantages of the great distances between the mines and the works. Moreover, the rise in the price of fuel, owing to the exhaustion of the forests in the neighbourhood of the mines and the feeble development of the mechanical parts of the works, also influenced the position of the metallurgical and mining industries of the Altai. And yet at the end of the last and beginning of the present century, the mechanical portion of the Altai works was placed upon another footing. It is worthy of remark that so early as 1766 a mining engineer Polzounov, erected the first steam acting blowing engine for blast furnaces at the Barnaoul works. Polzounov may justly be called the forerunner of Watt. In the Altai also the first experiment of laying down a tram line was made in 1817, for transporting the ore from the Zmeinogorsk mine and the Zmeevsk works, along a distance of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  versts.

Owing to the above mentioned causes, the production of silver at the Altai began to decrease considerably, especially since 1868; so also the amount of copper smelted, which in 1872 amounted to nearly 40,000 pouds, subsequently gradually fell. The following table gives the production of the Altai mining region during the last ten years.

| Years. | P r o d u c t i o n . |                 |           |               |
|--------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|
|        | S i l v e r .         |                 | L e a d . | C o p p e r . |
|        | Pouds.                | Pounds.         | Pouds.    | Pounds.       |
| 1882   | 397                   | $25\frac{1}{4}$ | 14,890    | 16,800        |
| 1883   | 368                   | $12\frac{1}{4}$ | 16,385    | 14,015        |
| 1884   | 446                   | $29\frac{1}{4}$ | 20,083    | 24,000        |
| 1885   | 535                   | $23\frac{1}{2}$ | 16,706    | 24,605        |
| 1886   | 613                   | $6\frac{3}{4}$  | 22,079    | 17,800        |
| 1887   | 661                   | 38              | 31,117    | 16,240        |
| 1888   | 682                   | $4\frac{1}{2}$  | 10,099    | 18,200        |
| 1889   | 652                   | $1\frac{3}{4}$  | 6,653     | 21,073        |
| 1890   | 681                   | 8               | 19,305    | 19,337        |
| 1891   | 595                   | $7\frac{1}{2}$  | 11,188    | 13,193        |

In reducing their smelting of silver and lead, the Altai works are adopting a wet process for the extraction of silver from the ores after a method invented by a Hungarian engineer Bittzansky for treating the ores from the Zyrianovsk mine.

In Eastern Siberia old workings of galena in crystalline limestone have been discovered in the government of Yeniseisk in the Minousinsk district at the Irbinsk estate. A large number of Chud mines have been found on the eastern declivity of the Alatau mountains and beyond in the valley of the Yenisei. These workings were renewed in the middle of the seventeenth century and the Lougazhsk copper smelting works were erected here at a distance of 9 versts from the Yenisei and 25 versts from the town of Minousinsk. These works not only smelted ores from the surrounding mines, but also from more distant localities; from

the upper courses of the rivers falling into the river Abacan, and from the Mainsk mine on the Yenisei at the village of Oznachennyi. In 1874 the Spassk copper smelting works were erected on the river Pechits. These works smelted ore from the Mainsk and several other mines. They as far as is known, only worked between 1879 and 1881 and altogether smelted about 1,250 pouds of copper.

Deposits of argentiferous galena are known in the government of Yakutsk at several points along the Vilua and Undybala, the tributary of the river Yana. In 1850 the latter deposit was explored, but it was found unsuitable for exploitation owing to its distance from populated localities and to the scarcity of forests. In all probability this was also the reason why the exploitation of the Undybalsk mine, which was carried on from 1765 to 1775, was afterwards stopped. There is another deposit in the Yakutsk province, on the river Batoma, a right tributary of the Lena, where it is said the native Yakuts smelt lead and silver.

Rumours of the occurrence of silver ores in the present Amour Governor-Generalship, at Daouria on the banks of the Shilka and Argouna, reached Moscow during the reign of Peter the Great, and induced this monarch to dispatch a party of Greek miners to Siberia under the direction of one Levandian, who in 1698, guided by the discovery of remains of Chud workings on the Koultouchnaya mountain 16 versts distance from Argouna, discovered a deposit of argentiferous lead ore in this locality and began to exploit it. In 1704 silver smelting works, called the Nerchinsk, was erected by order of Peter I. At that time the whole of this portion of the Transbaikalia, which subsequently comprised the Nerchinsk mining region, was a perfectly wild country only inhabited by nomad natives. To introduce a regular mining industry into this region, it was necessary to take measures for the emigration of Russian settlers and to overcome immense difficulties. This explains why at first the mining industry in the Nerchinsk region developed very slowly. But the production of silver began to increase considerably with the opening out of new mines and with the growth of the population in the region.

The introduction of smelting by private Siberians also had a beneficial effect. The maximum production of silver was, during the period 1763 to 1786, when it attained 629½ pouds. In 1790 the yield of silver fell to 219 pouds, it subsequently periodically fluctuated, and in 1847 it even fell below 200 pouds. From that time the production of silver in the Nerchinsk region declined completely, and from 64½ pouds smelted in 1850 it fell to 7½ pouds in 1863, and then it temporarily ceased altogether. The reasons of this fall in the silver production of the Nerchinsk region were the flooding of the mines, the economic revolution produced by the abolition of the serfs and of the obligatory labour at the works, and chiefly the revolution which took place in the management of the Nerchinsk works, with the opening of new and richer gold workings, when all the force and means of the region were directed to the extraction of gold, which became the chief object of production instead of silver and lead. Thus there is no foundation for speaking of the exhaustion of the deposits of silver ore in the Nerchinsk region, and there is reason for supposing that the production of silver might revive with fresh energy, if the economic conditions of the region were improved. As regards the deposits of silver ores, it can only be said that as many as 90 different mines have been opened out in the Nerchinsk region, that vein deposits predominate in the south-western,



and pocket deposits in the north-eastern portion. Besides silver and lead, deposits of copper ores are also known, but although trials were made to exploit and smelt them, the results were not favourable. At the present time altogether 10 mines are worked and their annual yield amounts to 100,000 pounds. The only existing silver smelting works in the Nerchinsk mining region, the Kroutomarsk works, smelt about 50 pounds of silver a year.

A deposit of argentiferous lead ores has been discovered in the far eastern extremity of Siberia, in the valley of the river Vantsin at about 120 versts distance from the gulf of St. Olga, and 37 versts from the gulf of Preobrazhensk. Explorations of this deposit, made in 1872, showed the presence of rather vast, ancient workings, and in recent times the exploitation of the ores was carried on by the Chinese.

Traces of Chud mines are found scattered about various parts of the region of the Kirghiz steppes, and in 1815 and 1820, these workings were the means of the discovery of rich deposits of argentiferous lead ores. A mining proprietor, Mr. Popov, guided by the indications of the natives, made the first claim for deposits of argentiferous lead and copper ores in the Kirghiz steppes and obtained a concession for the acquirement of what lands and forests he might need for the exploitation of the mineral wealth of the region and for the erection of metallurgical works. Already in 1857, 106 copper workings and 44 argentiferous lead and copper ore mines were declared; and at the close of 1888, the Karkaralinsk district of the Semipalatinsk province, comprised 121 claims of ore deposits, both copper and argentiferous lead; while in the whole of the Kirghiz steppes up to 400 ore bearing deposits are known. The following are the most important. The richest argentiferous lead ore deposits are situated in the southern portion of the Karkaralinsk district between the town of Karkaralinsk and lake Balkhash, at a distance of 200 to 250 versts from the above named town. This locality is desert and void of forest and at a great distance from the river Irtysh which is the only convenient means of communication in this region.

There is another tract of argentiferous lead and partly argentiferous lead and copper ore deposits, to the north of the above region at a distance of 75 to 100 versts from the town of Karkaralinsk to the south and south-west of this town. Among the many vein deposits of this district which have been opened out, the vast deposit of Ber-Kara is particularly distinguished. The Bogoslovsk mine was laid out on this deposit by Popov and worked to a depth of 18 sagesen. This mine yielded both argentiferous lead and copper ores, which were smelted at two works erected by Popov, and also at the Altai works to which they were temporarily transported. Deposits of copper ores are particularly abundant on the borders of the Karkaralinsk and Pavlodarsk districts. Many of these deposits occur in the form of veins of greater or less thickness, and in some instances somewhat considerable masses of native copper have been found. The copper ores extracted from this region were smelted at copper smelting works erected in the neighbourhood. Oxidized copper ores are found in the sandstone strata occurring to the south of the town of Semipalatinsk in the basin of the river Aschi-Sou, and in the north-western corner of the Karkaralinsk district, near the borders of the Akmolinsk province in the lower courses of the river Chiderta.

Copper smelting was first started in the Kirghiz steppes, at the Blagodato-Stefanovsk works, erected by Popov at about 80 versts distance to the north-east of the town of Karka-

ralinsk. These works continued in action until 1861, when they were finally closed for want of fuel. Popov also erected the following metallurgical works: the Alexandrovsk which exclusively smelted argentiferous lead ores, and were situated at a distance of 35 versts to the north of the Bayan-Aoulsk station; the Bogoslovsk works, in the centre of the richest deposits of argentiferous lead and copper ores, on mount Berkara at 80 versts distance to the south of Karkaralinsk; and the Ioanno-Predtechensk works near the Kyziltavsk coal mines. All these works, as well as those erected by Mr. Kouznetsov near the Grachevsk station, on the left bank of the Irtysh, had no guarantee for their supply of fuel, and only worked intermittently, and their annual yield of copper did not exceed 8,000 pounds.

The Spassk copper smelting works were erected by the heirs of Mr. Ryazanov in the beginning of the sixties, in the district of Akmolinsk near the borders of the Karkaralinsk district, and from that time the copper production of the Kirghiz steppes considerably increased, and in 1870 reached its highest 'normal of 38,800 pounds. During the entire period of the existence of the Spassk works, which were closed in 1885, the production of copper, at the Kirghiz mines varied between 18,500 and 34,000 pounds per year. After the closing of the Spassk works however, the Kirghiz steppes lost every importance among the copper producing regions of Russia.

The production of silver and lead at the Kirghiz works was carried on very irregularly, and in very limited quantities until 1883. In 1882 a rich and already known deposit of galena and oxidized lead and copper ores was explored at Kyzyl-Espe, situated in the Akchetavsk district, at a distance of about 80 versts to the north-north-west of lake Balkhash. An experimental smelting of these ores was begun in 1883, at the works erected at the mine, and also at the Kozmo-Demyanovsk works situated at 18 versts to the south-east of the town of Karkaralinsk, and 280 versts from the mine. The galena and lead ores extracted from the Kyzyl-Espe mine proved exceedingly rich, with about 12 zolotniks of silver per pound of ore and about 50 to 70 per cent of lead.

In recent years the production of silver and lead has not only increased at the works erected by Popov, but experimental smeltings have been carried on at several other mines belonging to other persons.

The following table shows the position of the silver and lead production in the Kirghiz steppes since 1883.

| Y<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>s | Production<br>of<br>silver. |                                | Production<br>of<br>lead. | Y<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>s | Production<br>of<br>silver. |                                | Production<br>of<br>lead. |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
|                       | Pounds.                     | Pounds.                        | Pounds.                   |                       | Pounds.                     | Pounds.                        | Pounds.                   |
| 1883                  | —                           | 33 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | —                         | 1888                  | 136                         | 8                              | 22,544                    |
| 1884                  | 10                          | 27 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 2,693                     | 1889                  | 110                         | 10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 10,336                    |
| 1885                  | 35                          | 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>  | 3,186                     | 1890                  | 72                          | 28 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 14,693                    |
| 1886                  | 84                          | 23 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> | 8,937                     | 1891                  | 96                          | 13 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 3,879                     |
| 1887                  | 171                         | 16 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> | 11,363                    |                       |                             |                                |                           |

## I r o n.

At the present time there are only four iron works in the whole of Siberia. It is true that, thanks to the vast river system offered by the Toura, Tobol, Irtysh, Obi and Tomi, up to the town of Tomsk nearly the whole of Western Siberia is in direct water communication with the very foot of the Urals, and can conveniently supply itself with metals from this centre of the Russian mining and metallurgical industries where there are most vast and rich deposits of iron ore, and numerous iron works. On the other hand, the system of the Amour enables goods transported by sea from Nikolaevsk to penetrate over 3,000 versts into the interior of Siberia. It is certain however that notwithstanding the cheapness of transport by water, the vast distances traversed must greatly increase the price of goods carried in this manner. At the same time the population of Siberia are in need of pig-iron and iron as well as of articles made of these metals, not only for domestic and agricultural purposes but also for the vast gold industry which offers a more and more urgent demand for metals and metallic goods. If up to the present time the iron industry is still very feebly developed in Siberia, it is not for want of ore deposits but for purely economic and commercial reasons. It should be mentioned however that the deposits of iron ores near the town of Yeniseisk were worked by the native Ostiaks and Tougouze previous to the Russian dominion of Siberia, and afterwards by the neighbouring peasants. The manufacture of iron direct from the ore, which was carried on here from ancient times, flourished to such an extent that at the beginning of the present century there were as many as forty smithies which yearly produced about 30,000 pounds of iron. The development of the gold industry however absorbed all the local labour and put an end to this branch of industry.

The erection of iron works within the Altai mining region was called forth by the requirements of the local mining and metallurgical industries. The first iron works, the Tomsk, were erected in the Altai in 1771, to replace the Irbinsk works, which were for a certain period under the jurisdiction of the Altai mining management but situated at a considerable distance in the government of Yeniseisk. After the erection of the Gourievsk works in the Kouznetsk region of the government of Tomsk on the river Bachata, for smelting the silver ores of the Salairsk mines, some deposits of iron ores were discovered in the near neighbourhood of the works, and a small blast furnace was erected for smelting the ore. In 1846 this furnace was replaced by one of greater dimensions and in 1747 the Gourievsk iron works were erected on this spot. The Tomsk works were closed in 1864 and the manufacture of iron was then concentrated at the Gourievsk works. The increased cost of charcoal fuel, owing to the exhaustion of the neighbouring forests, induced the works, in 1873, to introduce coal and to replace the bloomery process for puddling. At the same time the increasing demand in the region for machines and steam engines led to the erection of special machine works, adjoining the Gourievsk works, and the production of this department is increasing every year. The ore smelted at the Gourievsk works is a brown hem-

atite, extracted from the deposits, lying near the villages of Salaisk Roudnik and Arpicbevo; both these deposits are considered very rich. The ores contain from 38.5 to 44.3 per cent of iron. The coal consumed at the Gourievsk works is from different pits situated at a small distance from the works. Coke is made from coal from the Bacbatsk deposit. Limestone flux, fire clay, building stone and other indispensable materials for carrying on works, are exploited in the near neighbourhood. Nearly all the workmen employed at the works are local inhabitants. The following table gives the production of the works during the last six years in pouds.

| Years. | Pig iron smelted. | Manufactured. |             |                |
|--------|-------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|
|        |                   | Iron.         | Iron goods. | Iron castings. |
| 1886   | 123,980           | 72,220        | 6,570       | 5,000          |
| 1887   | 133,300           | 44,040        | 5,500       | 4,820          |
| 1888   | 70,880            | 60,825        | 5,675       | 8,080          |
| 1889   | 99,010            | 50,630        | 4,300       | 8,900          |
| 1890   | 115,960           | 60,130        | 2,230       | 9,300          |
| 1891   | 126,020           | 63,230        | 6,163       | 10,830         |

The excellent quality of the iron ores discovered in the Minousinsk region of the government of Yeniseisk, led to the construction of two iron works in this district. The Irbinsk iron works were erected by the Government as early as 1740, on the right bank of the Yenisei at a distance of about 100 versts to the north-east of the town of Minousinsk. In 1774 the Irbinsk works were given over to a private individual and after passing from one hand to another, they became quite disorganized and were ultimately closed. A rich deposit of magnetic iron ore is known within the limits of the 125,000 dessiatines of forest belonging to these works. Another locality, rich in iron ore, occurs in the south-western corner of the government of Yeniseisk, where the spurs of the Altai and Sayansk mountains hinder the rapid course of the river Abakana, which falls into the Yenisei, at several versts from the borders of the government of Tomsk, and 80 versts from the northern frontier of China.

A Moscow merchant Mr. Kolchougin was the first to penetrate into this district, in 1865, and having discovered a rich deposit of iron ore on the left bank of the river Abakana, at about 200 versts distance from its junction with the Yenisei, he erected the Abakansk iron works on the spot. The explorations made here showed the presence of thick deposits of magnetic, and spathic iron ore and of brown hematite. The vast thickness of this deposit and the huge store of ore it contains can be seen from the fact that it extends for a distance of about a verst and intersects an entire mountain about 60 sages high from foot to summit. These ores contain from 61 to 65 per cent of metallic iron, and give on smelting from 50 to 60 per cent of pig iron; moreover they are very easily smelted.

The Abakansk works smelt with charcoal fuel, which it procures from the 117,000 dessiatines of forest attached. The erector of these works founded a village in their neighbourhood, which he populated with workmen from the various Ural works. Besides the people regularly employed there the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages and natives are attracted by the auxiliary and other labour, offered by the works. Owing to the bankruptcy of the proprietor these works are now exploited by an artel or company of local workmen, who not having sufficient capital or labour for carrying on the business in a proper manner, only keep it going in a very small way. And yet the technical conditions offered by the rich stores of excellent ore, the possibility of applying water power, the good quality of the articles turned out, which in no way cede to those of the Ural works, and also the profitable economic conditions presented by a contingent of experienced workmen and a vast region for sale opened to the works by means of water communication, all this proves the possibility of reviving the activity of the Abakansk works on a perfectly new footing.

The following table gives the production of these works in pouds, during the last 6 years.

| Y e a r. | Pig iron<br>smelted. | M a n u f a c t u r e d. |             |                   |
|----------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
|          |                      | I r o n.                 | Iron goods. | Iron<br>castings. |
| 1886     | 73,300               | 65,650                   | —           | 3,200             |
| 1887     | 70,530               | 75,800                   | 4,400       | 4,260             |
| 1888     | 41,830               | 17,790                   | 3,095       | 2,020             |
| 1889     | 13,770               | 7,920                    | 1,330       | 8,710             |
| 1890     | 74,160               | 52,250                   | 5,050       | 2,820             |
| 1891     | 124,770              | 82,740                   | 6,940       | 5,900             |

The Nikolaevsk iron works are situated in the government of Irkutsk on a tributary of the river Oka, which falls into Angara, and at a distance of 600 versts from Irkutsk, and 180 versts by road from the town of Nizhneoudinsk. These works were erected by the Government in 1845, and in 1864 passed entirely into the hand of Mr. Trapeznikov, a merchant. The new proprietor devoted about a million roubles to this affair, and raised the yield of the works; but being occupied in other matters he was obliged to sell them in 1870 to Mr. Lavrentiev, also a merchant, who in his turn after two years, sold the works, mines and plant to the brothers Boutin, merchants of Nerchinsk. The works own several iron mines situated at distances of 4 to 90 versts. The ore, a magnetic iron ore, gives from 40 to 55 per cent of pig iron.

The works have 48,840 dessiatines of forest attached to them. The motive power is partly hydraulic and partly steam. The population of the works now numbers 3,500, including 700 to 800 workmen. The production is inconsiderable and does not even suffice for the near neighbouring demand.

Their yield during the last six years was as follows, in pouds. In addition to this the Nikolaevsk works manufacture steel, only in very limited quantities.

| Y e a r. | Pig iron smelted. | M a n u f a c t u r e d. |             |                |
|----------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------|----------------|
|          |                   | I r o n.                 | Iron goods. | Iron castings. |
| 1886     | 213,900           | 82,040                   | 29,570      | 27,570         |
| 1887     | 153,060           | 70,230                   | 22,940      | 29,050         |
| 1888     | 150,470           | 96,950                   | 24,840      | 31,250         |
| 1889     | 163,450           | 103,650                  | 25,000      | 38,600         |
| 1890     | 204,760           | 121,370                  | 24,870      | 35,430         |
| 1891     | 203,480           | 108,630                  | 28,450      | 33,630         |

The Petrovsk works, belonging to His Majesty's Cabinet are situated in the Transbaikal province in the Verkhneoudinsk region along the river Baliaga, a tributary of the Khilok, which falls into the Selenga, and at a distance of 450 versts from the provincial town of Chita. The Petrovsk works were founded in 1789 for supplying pig iron and manufactured iron to the Nerchinsk works and for satisfying the demand of the State and private individuals in Eastern Siberia. The ore is extracted from the Balyaginsk mine, on the upper courses of the river Balyaga. It is a magnetic iron ore and is very plentiful. The pig iron is smelted with the aid of charcoal fuel, furnished from 80,000 dessiatines of forest attached to the mines. The works employ about 300 men. The motive power is mainly hydraulic. The production of these works is exceedingly limited and their produce can only satisfy the local requirements of the region.

The following table gives the production of the Nerchinsk works during the last six years, in pouds.

| Y e a r. | Pig iron smelted. | M a n u f a c t u r e d. |             |                |
|----------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------|----------------|
|          |                   | I r o n.                 | Iron goods. | Iron castings. |
| 1886     | 68,860            | 5,040                    | 3,900       | 4,890          |
| 1887     | 44,640            | 7,250                    | 2,680       | 610            |
| 1888     | 31,920            | 10,420                   | 3,210       | 3,240          |
| 1889     | 36,320            | 26,950                   | 2,770       | 2,330          |
| 1890     | 43,500            | 31,050                   | 2,940       | 1,635          |
| 1891     | 59,085            | 30,140                   | 3,045       | 1,830          |

Lastly it should be mentioned that iron ore deposits are known in many parts of the Yakutsk province, and that the Tanginsk iron works were erected at 30 versts distance from the town of Yakutsk as early as the XVII century, and continued in work until the end of the XVIII century. Besides, the preparation of iron direct from the ore was carried on at other places, and there was also an iron works near lake Baikal on the river Anga. At the present day the exploitation of the ore and its conversion into iron is only carried on by the Yakuts as a village industry. The most important deposits occur on the river Batoma, which falls from the right side, into the Lena. The ore, a brown hematite, here lies in a bed up to three feet thick and has been under exploitation since 1750. Other deposits of iron ore, including red and brown hematite and spathic iron ore, are also worked by the Yakuts in this province but have not been subject to any detailed exploration. The spathic iron ore deposits occur on the river Vilua.

Apparently a rather rich deposit of iron ores occurs in the southern portion of the Littoral province at 20 versts distance from the gulf of St. Olga along the system of the river Avvakoumovka which falls into this gulf.

### **Tin, Mercury and Sulphur.**

The presence of tin ores was discovered in the Transbaikal province along the river Onona in the year 1811. These ores had long been exploited and smelted by the native Bourriata. These first discoveries gave rise to a search for tin ores in other localities along a distance of 100 versts, along both banks of the Onona. A mine was started, the tin ore was exploited from time to time and the ore smelted on a small scale during a period of about thirty years. In 1843 this mine was ultimately closed, but this does not argue that the deposit is unfit for working, and there is reason for thinking that if it were more thoroughly explored it would be possible to reestablish the exploitation of the ore.

The Ildikansk or cinnabar deposits in the Nerchinsk region lie in the mountains on the right side of the river Sernyi Ildekan. The cinnabar occurs in a vein passing through limestone, but its thickness rarely exceeds two inches. The exploitation of this vein was started in 1759 and was subsequently renewed several times, but without success. It may also be mentioned that the Yakuts living along the upper courses of the river Amga which falls into the river Aldan, a right tributary of the Lena, employ cinnabar found by them in the system of this river, as a medicine.

A deposit of native sulphur occurs in a limestone mountain at a distance of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  versts from the above mentioned Ildikansk mercury deposit. Between 1789 and 1797, 425 pouds of sulphur were extracted from this deposit. Sulphur in the form of sulphur pyrites is extremely common in the metamorphic schists, covering vast areas in Eastern Siberia. The pyrites are disseminated in the schists, or occur in quartz veins intersecting the schists, or also form cross veins. Besides this, spheroidal concretions of sulphur pyrites are frequently found in the brown coal deposits along the river Kempendzyai, a right tributary of the Viluya. The exploitation of pyrites has not yet been carried on in any part of Eastern Siberia. In Western

Siberia from 150,000 to 200,000 pouds of pyrites are annually raised from the Sougatovsk mine in the Altai miniuig region.

## C o a l.

Deposits of coal are known throughout the whole extent of Siberia, from the borders of the government of Orenburg to the mouths of the Lena, Kamchatka, island of Sakhalin and the frontier of Corea. At the present time coal is only worked in Kouznetsk basin, on the island of Sakhalin and on the Khirgiz steppes. It is also proposed to exploit the recently discovered and explored deposits of coal in the southern portion of the Littoral province. In the mean time the varied application of mineral fuel obliges one to think that the Siberian Railway will give rise to the exploitation of coal in various parts of Siberia, before it materially effects other branches of mining industry; and the railway itself will be in need of mineral fuel, especially in those localities where it passes through forestless steppe regions.

The following data treat upon the coal deposits in different parts of Siberia. In Western Siberia there are rich coal seams in the eastern portion of the Altai mining region in the Salairsk and Alatau mountains. This is the so-called Kouznetsk coal basin. The southern limit of this basin lies at about 60 versts distance to the south of the town of Kouznetsk; its eastern boundary extends along the western declivity of the Alatau mountains; its western boundary stretches along the eastern foot of the Salairsk mountains, but in places recedes from it and approaches the river Ina which falls into the Obi. The river Toma divides the basin along its length into two parts, and as strata, similar to those in which the coal seams lie in the neighbourhood of Kouznetsk, are also found along the banks of the river Toma up to the very town of Tomsk, it may in all likelihood be supposed that the coal basin extends to this town. Hence the entire basin should be 400 versts long and 100 versts wide, which equals an area of 40,000 square versts. In many parts of this basin, thick seams of coal of excellent quality are found. The coal formations belong to the Jurassic system.

The Telbessk iron mine is situated on the south-eastern border of the Kouznetsk basin, on the river Telbes which falls into the Kandoma. This mine is estimated to contain a store of 75 million pouds of magnetic iron ore; and close to it there is another iron mine, the Soukharinsk. Such an abundance of iron ore, capable of guaranteeing a supply to a large iron works for a long period, induced the local mining management to make a careful survey of this south-eastern corner of the Kouznetsk basin, with a view to the discovery of coal veins in the neighbourhood of these iron mines. These surveys were crowned with perfect success and gave the following results. A seam of coal one sagene thick was found on the left bank of the Kandoma at a distance of 5 versts from the village of Kaltansk. This seam was followed along its strike for 380 sagesnes, and it was estimated to contain 8,300,000 pouds of coal. The first Kinerkinsk seam is situated on the left side of the river Kinerka which falls into the Kandoma, above the village of Kaltansk. It has been followed for a distance of 163 sagesnes, is 4 sagesnes thick and dips at an angle of 22°. The store of coal has been estimated at 16,400,000 pouds. The second seam is on the hanging wall of the first at



35 sagues distance from it. It is one sagene thick and has been followed for a distance of 75 sagues. It is estimated to contain 2,250,000 pouds of coal. The third seam, 9 feet thick, is 50 sagues from the hanging wall of the second.

The first Varlamovsk seam is situated on the southern declivity of the Kirchiaksk mountains, lying on the left bank of the Kandoma, near the village of Kirchiaksk. The thickness of the seam is one sagene, and it dips at an angle of 18°. The seam has been followed for a distance of 210 sagues; and is estimated to contain 5,515,000 pouds of coal. The second seam lies on the hanging wall of the first. Its thickness is 4½ feet, and it has been followed for a distance of 100 sagues; it is estimated to contain 2,115,000 pouds. The Kirchiaksk seam lies on the northern side of the western end of the Kirchiaksk mountain. It is up to 7 sagues thick and has a dip of 29°. On the northern declivity of the same mountain there are seven seams of coal, known by the name of the «Ozernyi» or lake seams, owing to their situation on lake Kirchiak. All these seams form one series, lying in a schistose clay. They include one seam 4½ feet thick; two, one sagene thick; and three, 2 sagues thick. They have not been followed up for more than 100 sagues, and have been estimated to contain over 12½ million pouds of coal. The Araldinsk seam outcrops at the bank of the river Aralda, which falls into the Kandoma on the right, opposite the village of Kirchiaksk. This seam is over 6 sagues thick and has a dip of 18°. It has been explored for 120 sagues along the strike, and it is estimated to contain 18 million pouds of coal. It is calculated that all the seams situated in the neighbourhood of the village of Kaltansk contain a store of over 65 million pouds of coal.

Further in the eastern portion of the basin, coal seams have been discovered in the neighbourhood of the town of Kouznetzk, on the banks of the river Toma, near the village of Artamonov above the town, and below the villages of Ilinsk and Shorokhova.

Exploratory workings have been carried on in the south-western extremity of the basin near the villages of Berezova and Kostenkova. The workings made near the village of Berezova showed that there the coal seams appear in the form of four separate series, at short distances from one another. The first series consists of four seams, from 2½ to 11½ feet thick. The second is composed of two seams 3½ and 7 feet thick. The third series includes eight seams from 2½ to 8½ feet thick, and lastly the fourth series consists of four seams from 2½ to 5 sagues thick. In exploring these seams four of the thickest beds were followed up for a distance of 70 to 2,000 sagues along the strike, and along the dip to the level of the river Berezovka only, and over 210 million pouds of coal were determined. Three seams of coal, one of which is 2½ sagues thick, have been discovered to the east of the village of Berezova, on the banks of the river Kandalena. A whole series of seams closely resembling the four series of the Berezovsk veins, has been found at two versts distance to the north of the village of Kostenkova on the river Kozlovka. This series consists of nine seams from 3 feet to 4½ sagues thick. Four seams have been explored for a distance of about 400 sagues and are estimated to contain a store of 40½ million pouds of coal. In general the coal fields of the south-western extremity of the basin, near the villages of Berezovka and Kostenkova, contain a store of over 250 million pouds of coal. The Magansk coal field has been found at five versts distance to the east of the village of Prokopievsk, to the north of Berezova, on the left side of the river Maganak

This deposit consists of one vein three sages thick. The coal from this seam gives a good coke, which has been successfully used in metallurgical operations.

As the above estimate of the stores of coal contained in the different seams only refers to the outcrop of those lying above the level of the river, and the lower levels of those veins were not included in the calculation, and as moreover, in the majority of cases, the strike of the seams was only followed up for an inconsiderable distance, so there can be no doubt that the actual stores of coal in this southern portion of the basin must be many times greater than the above cited figures, and this portion of the basin with its inexhaustible stores of fuel lying in close proximity with the richest deposits of magnetic iron ore, may surely have a great industrial future.

The Afoninsk coal field lies near the village of Afonin and at a distance of 60 versts from the Tomsk works, on the one hand, and from the Gourievsk and Gavrilovsk on the other. Three coal seams have been found, one of which has been destroyed by an underground fire, and all that remains is a hed of ash  $1\frac{1}{2}$  sagine thick. The second seam, situated on the hanging wall of the first, is about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  sages thick, consists of a bitumenous coal of good quality and was explored to a small depth in 1851. The third seam is thin and has not therefore been explored.

The Bachatsk coal field is situated to the north-east of the village of Bachatsk at 27 versts distance from the Gourievsk works. This seam is not of uniform thickness throughout, hut narrows in some parts and widens in others, and in some places is as much as 25 sages thick. In some places it is intersected by bands of schistose clay, which divide it into several separate seams. It has a dip of  $65^{\circ}$  to  $75^{\circ}$  and is sometimes almost vertical. The coal varies greatly in quality in different portions of the seam; in the centre it is a dry, non-caking, dense, dull coal, which burns almost without any flame; while towards the roof and floor it is a semi-bitumenous, friable, bright, caking coal, burning with a flame. Five coal seams have been discovered to the north of the Bachatsk coal mine, on the river Cherta. These seam vary from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 sagine in thickness and have been explored by workings for three versts distance. The same seams which appear in such abundance in the southern portion of the basin, outcrop in the north along the Great and Little Bachat rivers. Deposits of coal were discovered along the river Ina as early as 1796. The first of these deposits was found to contain two heds  $\frac{1}{2}$  and 1 sagine thick, and the second deposit to consist of one seam 1 sagine thick. In the latter, the surrounding sandstone rock contains portions of trees, and even entire fossil trees, 1 to 2 feet in diameter. The Bachatsk and Kalchouginsk deposits are the only ones which are now under exploitation. The coal is converted into coke and consumed at the Salairsk works.

The following table gives the yield of these mines during the last five years.

| Year. | The Bachatsk mine. | The Colchouginsk mine. |
|-------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1887  | 485,600            | 322,200                |
| 1888  | 640,900            | 369,500                |
| 1889  | 530,750            | 364,700                |
| 1890  | 547,300            | 504,300                |
| 1891  | 505,650            | 642,768                |

During the last three years the following amounts of coke were produced.

| Year. | At the<br>Bachatsk<br>mine. | At the<br>Kolchouginsk<br>mine. |
|-------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1889  | 273,254                     | 37,456                          |
| 1890  | 340,900                     | 71,750                          |
| 1891  | 328,766                     | 91,000                          |

In Eastern Siberia, coal fields occur in the government of Yeniseisk, between Krasnoyarsk and Achinsk, on the one hand; and from Krasnoyarsk, through Kansk to the borders of the government of Irkutsk on the other hand, and lastly, to the south-west and south of Krasnoyarsk along the foot of the Alatau and uplands of the Sayansk mountains. The vast areas comprised by these deposits belong to fresh water formations of the jurassic system. The vast tracts of these deposits have only been more or less explored along the Siberian postal route and along certain rivers, but even these explorations have already shown the presence of a rather considerable number of spots with outcrops of brown coal. A seam of coal about five feet thick has been found near the village of Koubekova at about 20 versts distance from the town of Krasnoyarsk along the river Yenisei. Two coal fields have been recently explored on the middle and lower courses of the river Choulym. In the first of these, the seams of brown coal and combustible schist crop out at the surface in several localities along the river Choulym, and were discovered at 20 versts distance from the village of Kourbatovsk.

In the second, the coal veins crop out directly on the banks of the rivers Serega and Ourup, and of several springs near the village of Antropova. A seam of brown coal 2 sagenes thick has been discovered at the village of Nazarovsk on the river Adadyma, and a seam 5 feet thick near the village of Kadat. The formations of this basin have been recognized as belonging to the tertiary system and the coal in them is distinguished from that of the jurassic system, by its greater density. This tertiary coal basin deserves the greatest attention of all the coal fields of the government of Yenisei, both from the quality of its coal the character of its seams, and by its distribution on the navigable portion of the river Choulym. Mount Izykh rises in the Minousinsk region on the right bank of the river Abakan at about 55 versts distance from its junction with the Yenesei and the thick beds of sandstone forming this mountain contain seams of coal half a sagine thick and more. Another locality in the Yeniseisk government, which is known to contain beds of coal, lies much farther north, namely on the banks of the Nizhnaya Toungouzka. The presence of coal here was known in the last century. At the beginning of the sixties of the present century, Sidorov during his expedition for making a detailed exploration of the deposits of graphite previously discovered by him in this locality, also visited the Nizhnaya Toungouzka, where he succeeded in discovering vast beds of coal in several localities, at a distance of 240 to 400 versts about the mouth of this river. The first of these beds was discovered opposite the mouth of the Malaya Scherbachikha otherwise known as the Abramova Scherbachikha, which falls into the Nizhnaya Toungouzka

from the right side at about 240 versts from its mouth. The thickness of the coal seam is 3 feet and it is of good quality.

The second deposit was discovered opposite the mouth of the river Troubkina which falls into the Nizhnaya Toungouzka from the right side at a distance of about 400 versts from its mouth. The coal seam is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick and extends for a distance of one verst; the coal is of good quality. The third deposit of coal was found at a distance of 40 versts from the mouth of the river Taimour, which falls into the Nizhnaya Toungouzka. This deposit consists of two seams, the lower of which is one sagene thick. A fourth deposit of coal was found on the right bank of the Nizhnaya Toungouzka at 185 versts from its mouth and about 5 versts above the mouth of the river Koupalnaya. The coal of these seams frequently approaches anthracite in its quality, and in many places the stratification is greatly distorted by trap rocks and the coal transformed into graphite.

In the government of Irkutsk, coal which is for the greater part brown coal, is known in many places in the southern portion of the government, where fresh water formations of the jurassic system occur. The coal seams which are two feet and more thick at the outcrop, lie among strata of schistose clay and yellow calcareous sandstone. At the present time up to 75 outcrops of coal are known in the southern half of the government of Irkutsk. Many of these seams deserve attention, either for their thickness or for the quality of their coal. Prospectings for coal have frequently been carried on in the neighbourhood of the village of Ousolie, with a view to furnishing the Irkutsk salt works with fuel. In these explorations coal seams up to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick were, amongst others, discovered. But in all probability the greatest importance will be ascribed to the deposits of coal along the river Oka; above the village of Ziminsk where a whole series of coal seams from 1 foot to 1 sagene thick outcrop on the high right bank of the river. Small exploratory works showed the presence of a store of 200 million pouds of coal in two places. It is a brown coal, with a large percentage of volatile matter, and it gives a powdery coke. After exposure to the atmosphere it, for the greater part, disintegrates into small peices, and resembles the coal of the Moscow basin in its qualities.

In the Yakutsk region, coal-bearing deposits occur along the whole middle course of the Lena and its tributaries and beyond, up to the lowlands of the Lena. Various modifications of this formation stretch out from the river Bolshaya Botama to the village of Bouloun, which is at a distance of about 100 versts from the mouth of the Lena; or for a distance of 1,800 versts down that river. These formations are also observable on the one side of the Lena, on the banks of the river Viluya, beyond the mouth of the Markha which falls into it, for a distance of 600 versts; and on the other side of the Lena, on the banks of the river Aldan, beyond the mouth of the Maya, for a distance of 400 versts, and from the town of Yakutsk to the north-east within 100 versts of the Verkhoyansk mountain chain, which also forms over 400 versts. With respect to the geological period of these deposits, they, like those of the government of Irkutsk, are considered as belonging to the jurassic system. Coal has been found in the far eastern extremity of Siberia, on the shores of the Gizhiginsk and Penzhinsk bays, and in several localities on the western shore of the peninsula of Kamchatka.

In the Amour Littoral region, coal deposits occur beyond the Baikal, directly on the south-eastern shore of this vast reservoir. Here at eight versts distance from the Posolsk monastery there are two coal seams, between the rivers Kourkoushevka and Pereemna. The upper seam, which is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  sagues thick, is broken up into thin seams and contains the stems and roots of fossil trees. The lower coal seam, which lies two sagues below the upper, on a level with the water, consists of a denser coal. The coal of this deposit is worked for supplying the Baikal steamboats with fuel, but the production is very limited. Besides this deposit, coal has been discovered near the Baikal, at the mouth of the river Mourin. The presence of coal seams is also known between Verkhneoudinsk and Selinginsk on the banks of lake Gousinyi; and the traces of their having been burnt are still in the superincumbent strata of sandstone and schistose clay. The occurrence of coal was discovered in 1858, on the river Ourya, which falls into the Aksha, a tributary of the Onon. This is a lignite coal, which in some places still exhibits a tree structure. The Douroisk and Chalbouchinsk deposits on the river Argouna are situated at a distance of 160 versts from one another. The Chalbouchinsk deposit was discovered in 1742. Both of these deposits have been frequently explored, but the extent of neither has been accurately determined. The Douroisk deposit is situated on the bank of the Argouna, 15 versts below the Koulassatouev frontier station. A seam of good quality coal  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick is known here. Should subsequent explorings show that this coal seam has a considerable extension, then it might acquire a great importance, as it is situated on the very bank of the river Argouna, along which the coal could easily be transported to the Amour.

Numerous exploratory workings, carried on since the middle of the last century, have shown the presence of several coal seams in the Chalhouchinsk deposit; but the small thickness of these seams and large amount of ash and sulphur pyrites in the coal, deprive it of any great importance.

Besides these deposits, seams of brown coal of recent formation occur in the Transbaikal on the upper courses of the river Onon, and also on the Shilka below the Shilkin works. The occurrence of coal is known on the river Zea on the parallels of Albazina and on the Belyi hills opposite the mouth of the Silindzha. From three to four coal seams crop out on the river Boureya. These seams are vertical owing to the extreme distortion of the entire stratification. Each of these seams is from one to two feet thick, and the coal is of good quality. The coal is interstratified with sandstone and clay slate, the latter of which bears distinct prints of conifer vegetation, showing that the formation belongs to the jurassic system. The same strata of sandstone and clay slate with interlayers of coal up to 1 foot thick, are found at a distance of 150 versts from the above mentioned outcrops, in several localities up to the mouth of the Numan.

Among the very many coal deposits on the middle courses of the Amour, the most remarkable is that discovered at a distance of 9 versts above the station of Innokentievsk, where two seams of brown coal can be followed up for a distance of two versts. These seams lie between beds of sandstone and hard, yellowish gray clay. The coal seams are from 3 to 5 feet thick. This coal consists of the remains of conifer trees, and the superincum-

bent clay contains numerous remains of leaves, fruits and other portions of plants, which often are very like the now existing plants; from which it may be concluded that it is of very recent formation and belongs to the tertiary system. Seams of brown coal also occur at several points along the lower course of the Amour at a short distance from its mouth. These seams occur in strata of sandstone and clay slate, exactly similar to those in the upper course of the Amour. A deposit of brown coal has been discovered at a distance of 160 versts from the town of Nikolaevsk, near the village of Novo-Mikhailovsk, up the Amour. The thickest of the seams in this deposit is  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet. Seams of brown coal, up to 1 foot thick, also occur at several points along the lower course of the Amour. The South-Oussouryisk region also contains beds of coal in many places. The first discovery of coal in this region was made at the time of its occupation by the Russians, at the Possietsk's gulf, where there are three seams of coal, the thickest of which is 4 feet. Coal was extracted from these deposits in the sixties to supply the Siberian flotilla. The following coal beds occur to the east of Possietsk's gulf.

Beds of coal have been discovered in the basin of the Amour along the rivers Sedima, Mangougai and Ambabira and at the mouth of the river Souifouna. Moreover coal seams are also known up the river Souifouna, on its right tributary, the Chingououza, in the neighbourhood of the village of Nikolsk and in the upper courses of the river near the stations of Konstantinovsk and Fadeevsk. The exploitation of the coal in various localities on the mouth, Souifouna, was begun in the sixties and is being continued to the present day. In the Oussouryisk gulf, coal beds have been discovered on the river Tsimou-khe, at the mouth of the river Kangoouza and on the river Shite-khe. Coal is also known to occur on the island of Poutiatin and on the north-eastern shore of Strelok bay. Vast deposits of coal have been discovered 40 versts up the river Souchan, which falls into the gulf of America. In 1886 a special mining expedition was sent there and the exploratory workings conducted by it showed the presence of three coal seams from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 sagene thick and having a considerable extension. From trials made by the fleet it was found that this coal is a semi-anthracite resembling Cardiff coal in its properties. A mine was laid out there by the expedition, and it is proposed to offer the exploitation of this mine to private enterprise. Lastly a deposit of coal has been found in the gulf of St. Olga on cape Nizmen.

There are rich coal fields on the island of Saghalin. The coal became known to the Russian sailors in 1859, when they began working it in the bay between cape Zhonkier (Doue) and cape Khoindzhe. From that time the coal beds in the neighbourhood of the station of Doue have been worked uninterruptedly. Since 1875 these mines have been in the hands of a private company, who has now increased their output to a million pouds. The coal lies in a whole series of beds from two to five feet thick; it is of excellent quality and quite equals the best sorts of Welsh coal. It contains from 74 to 84 per cent of carbon, a very small amount of ash and it gives up to 60 per cent of coke. The coal is chiefly consumed by the Russian vessels navigating the shores of Siberia, but it is also used by foreign vessels coming to the Russian ports of the Pacific. A number of coal beds have been discovered to the north and south of the Doue station, but only one of these, situated between the mouths of the rivers Sertounai and Nayassi, has been worked. The quality of this coal

and its mode of occurrence are exactly similar to those of the Doue coal. Several coal deposits are also known in the interior of the island.

In the region of the Kirghiz steppes, the search for coal formed the special care of the Government for a very long time. The prospectings were carried on in the Orenburg region, adjacent to the Kirghiz steppes; and the chief inducement for this search was the entire impoverishment of the forests in this region, necessitating the abandonment of all its mineral wealth for want of fuel. The vast area of the Obschyi Syrt, which 80 or 100 years ago was covered with forest, is now transformed into a bare steppe without a single twig, and where the only fuel is dried dung. The vast Bashkir forests, which according to the general survey, comprised four million dessiatines, have been more than half felled. The search for coal in different parts of the Orenburg steppes was not however crowned with success. Prospectings conducted in the Obschyi Syrt only showed the presence of combustible schist of medium quality, belonging to the jurassic system. The deposits of brown coal discovered in the Troitsk and Cheliabinsk districts have up to now been considered unworthy of attention, but apparently other deposits have recently been discovered which might receive a practical application.

Two vast coal fields have been discovered further in the Kirghiz steppes, in its western portion in the Tourgai province. The first of these is situated at a 170 versts distance to the south-east of the town of Tourgai, formerly an Orenburg fortress, on the upper courses of the river Dzhilanchik, near Maidam Tal. Two horizontal seams of brown coal are known there. The thickness of the upper seam is from one to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and the lower seam is about 1 foot thick; they are separated by seam of soft, blue clay 1 foot thick. The coal of these seams is of two kinds, one a dense bitumenous coal with a bright conchoidal fracture and the other a slate coal. This deposit has been followed up by exploratory workings for a distance of five versts in length up the river Dzhilanchik and for a width of 100 to 200 sagenes. Taking the mean thickness of the upper seam only as 2 feet and the weight of a cubic sagene of the coal as 340 pounds the explored portion of the upper seam would contain about 40 million pounds.

The second deposit of brown coal is situated at 100 versts to the east-north-east of the town of Tourgai, at the Yar-Koue wells, on the declivity of a height which forms, as it were, the mountain shore of the valley of the river Tourgai. Some ancient wells were found on the declivity of this height at 5 versts distance from the above mentioned wells, and in clearing them out, traces of coal were found in them. They were then deepened and a seam of coal about one sagene thick was encountered. This discovery was followed up by extensive exploratory workings, which embraced an area of  $3\frac{1}{4}$  square versts of coal field. As the average thickness of the coal seam is one sagene, and a cubic sagene of coal was found by experiment to weigh nearly 340 pounds, the area explored contains over 275 million pounds of coal. The coal of this deposit is dark brown, has a laminar structure and a conchoidal fracture. It burns with a bright flame and gives from 4 to 7 per cent of ash; some portions contain sulphur pyrites. It has been proved by experiment that this coal is quite suitable both for ordinary heating and for steam purposes, as on the steamers of the Syr-Daria, and also for treating metals in reverberatory furnaces.

Several coal seams are known in the Akmolinsk province on the upper courses of the rivers Ishim, Sokour and others, which fall into the Noura. The Karagandinsk pit, belonging to Messrs. Riazanov, is situated at 200 versts to the north-west of Karkaralinsk near the borders of the Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk provinces. Two coal seams are known, 1 and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  sagues thick. Both are worked, and have been shown by exploratory workings to extend on both sides to the east and west for a distance of 11 and 9 versts. Thus this deposit is very vast. The coal is a true coal with 8 to 12 per cent of ash and semi-caking coke. In former times the Spassk works, situated at 30 versts distance to the south of the pits, smelted their copper to the amount of 30,000 pounds annually, with this coal. The yield of the Karagandinsk mine has been somewhat considerable during the last 15 years, and in 1884 it exceeded 1,500,000 pounds of coal. Many coal seams are known in the Pavlodarsk, Karkaralinsk and Semipalatinsk districts, and also in the neighbourhood of the town of Sergiopol.

In the Pavlodar and Karkaralinsk districts, the Taldykoulsk mine is on the first coal bed discovered in the Kirghiz steppes, in 1838. It is situated at 25 versts to the north-east of the Alexandrovsk works and at about 200 versts from Pavlodar. Exploratory workings were carried out at the beginning of the forties which showed that the deposit extended for a length of one verst and for a width of half a verst. As many as eight coal seams were discovered from 1 to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick. This coal was used in the smithies and partly in smelting the lead ores at the Alexandrovsk works. Altogether 337,000 pounds of coal were extracted from this deposit between 1838 and 1860. The Sarykoulsk coal deposit is situated at 12 versts distance to the south-west of the Taldykoulsk pits and 50 versts to the north of Bayan-Aoula. The coal here occurs in a bed 4 feet thick at a depth of 16 feet under the surface. The Maoukobensk coal mine is situated at a distance of 5 versts from the Sarykoulsk deposit and at 20 versts to the north-west of the Alexandrovsk works. The total thickness of the three workable coal seams is 5 feet. The coal seams have been determined over an area of six square versts. The coal was found by chemical analyses to contain 50.5 per cent of carbon, 42.10 per cent of volatile matter and 1.4 per cent of ash. The coal is black, bitumenous, burns with a long flame but does not coke. It was used for copper smelting. This mine was worked during 1869 and 1870.

The Nikolsk mine is situated at a distance of 90 to a 100 versts to the north-west of the Alexandrovsk works, near lake Alka-Sor. There are two seams of anthracite 2.25 and 6 sagues thick. They lie between clay slates and limestone. This anthracite was found by analyses to contain 74 per cent of carbon, 14 per cent of volatile matter and 12 per cent of ash. It was found by trials made at the copper smelting works, that this coal gives a very powerful heat. The Kysyltavsk mine is situated at a distance of about 70 versts from the Alexandrovsk works and 90 versts from the Bogoslovsk copper and lead smelting works. This is one of the best coal fields known. It includes five seams from 2 to 4 feet thick. The Ioanna-Predtechensk copper smelting works are erected immediately over the mine. The Kysyltavsk coal gives a fairly good coke. In 1873 this mine yielded altogether  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds of coal. The Dzhemantouzk mine is also upon one of the thickest and best coal beds yet found in the Kirghiz steppes. It was discovered in 1864, at 90 versts to the south of the Alexandrovsk works. This mine comprises five coal seams from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 feet



thick, which unite at a depth of 13 sagues into one bed which dips at an angle of 32° to 42°. The Dzhemantouzk coal is an anthracite of a gray colour. It is dense and bright with a roughly conchoidal fracture and gives a great heat, but no coke. It contains a very small amount of sulphur, pyrites and gypsum. This deposit is situated at 60 versts distance from the river Irtysh. In the Semipalatinsk district coal was first discovered in 1869, by Mr. Permikin a gold mine owner, at 7 versts distance from the Grachevsk station and 120 versts from the town of Semipalatinsk.

A whole group of coal fields occurs in the north-eastern portion of the Kirghiz steppes at 18 to 20 versts distance from the left bank of the river Irtysh and about 120 versts to the west of the town of Semipalatinsk. The presence of coal in the neighbourhood of the Irtysh was known at an earlier period, as in the sixties a gold mine owner, Mr. Kouznetsov, erected a copper smelting works on the left bank of the Irtysh, which consumed coal from a mine situated near lake Dongoulek-Sor. This deposit contains two seams of coal, whose total thickness is about one sagene. They are separated by a layer of clay slate two feet thick. The coal from this mine is black and very bright, rather dense and gives a coke of good quality. This coal must be regarded as the best in the Kirghiz steppes. The Ouzoun-Sor deposit is situated 8 versts to the south of the above mine, and the Oinak-Sor at 6 versts distance to the south-east of the latter. The Oinak-Sor deposit includes several coal seams, from two to fifteen feet thick, but the seams are very distorted. The coal of these three and other adjacent out-cropping seams, can not only furnish the inhabitants of the steppes with fuel, but could also have an important significance for the steam navigation of the Irtysh and for the Siberian Railway, as well as for the metallurgical works of the Altai and Kirghiz steppes.

Deposits of coal have been found in several places in the neighbourhood of Sergiopol over a distance of 20 versts along the river Ayagouz and its tributaries. The following four are among these deposits: 1. The Spassk mine on the left bank of the Ayagouz, above the river Baiboulak. Several thin seams of coal from 1½ to 3 feet thick were discovered here, the thickest of them being over 4 feet. This coal is not of particularly good quality; it is black, finely laminar, disintegrates in the air into a fine powder. It is only used as smithy coal. 2. The Krestovsk mine, on the right bank of the river Ayagouz, in the upper sources of the Kyzyl-Chilik, is at two versts distance from the Spassk mine. The seam of coal, which was found at an inconsiderable depth, proved exceedingly thin and the coal was found to contain a large amount of ash. 3. The Troitsk or Chekartinsk mine lies at eight versts distance from the Spassk mine, near the river Chekarta. The coal seams are here considerably thicker than in the Spassk pit and are as much as 1 sagene thick in some places; it is of good quality and is used in smithies and for house heating. 4. The Voskresensk deposit is situated at 10 versts from the Spassk pit, on the left side of the river Ayagouz, above the river Chekarta. The inconsiderable exploratory workings made in this deposit do not give any idea of its extent or quality.

The above concise enumeration of the coal deposits of the Kirghiz steppes, show that this region, which is so in want of fuel for the exploitation of its mineral wealth in silver, lead, and copper ores, may apparently be considered as fully guaranteed in this respect. But

at the present time the production of coal has not only made no progress but has even fallen. Although the production from 1880 to 1885 equalled from one million to 1,635,000 pounds a year, it has considerably fallen in recent years, and in 1891 was only 86,800 pounds.

### Graphite.

Deposits of graphite are known in Siberia in the Kirghiz steppes, and in the governments of Yeniseisk and Irkutsk. In the Kirghiz steppes several deposits have been discovered, three of which, situated in the Kokpektinsk and Sergiopolsk districts, have been exploited and the graphite sent from there to the Perm steel and gun works. In the government of Yeniseisk deposits of graphite were discovered in 1859 and 1863, by a Mr. Sidorov, in the Tourankhansk region along the rivers Nizhnaya Tougouzka, Bakhta and Koupeika, the right tributaries of the Yenisei. At a distance of 200 to 500 versts up the Nizhnaya Tougouzka there are four localities where graphite is found. This graphite is sometimes laminar and sometimes columnar, and occurs in beds from one to two sages thick, between layers of clay slate which have been metamorphosed by the action of eruptive rocks; so that it may be supposed that this graphite has proceeded from the beds of jurassic coal which abound in this locality. The graphite contains from 4 to 6 per cent of clay. It is estimated that this deposit contains a store of 10 million pounds of graphite. The excellent quality of this mineral has been recognized at both Russian and foreign exhibitions. The Touroukhansk mineral has met with particular praise from various scientific and practical men; several foreign authorities have likened it to Cumberland graphite, and in America a series of comparative experiments proved that it excels the Ceylon graphite in purity. In 1877 an other deposit of graphite was discovered by Sidorov on the Nizhnaya Tougouzka, and 2,000 pounds of picked graphite were extracted and sent abroad. Seventy thousand pounds of graphite have been extracted from the deposits discovered by Sidorov in 1861, along the river Koureika, which falls into the Yenisei at a 100 versts from the town of Touroukhansk. Out of this amount the following parcels were dispatched during the winter 1863 to 1864: 1. five hundred pounds direct along the river Pechora, over the northern marshes by reindeer and thence by sea to London; 2. five thousand pounds also by the northern route to the river Taz by reindeer and thence by the Taz and Obi Bay to Obdorsk, and then by the Pechora; 3. seven thousand pounds by Yeniseisk, Tomsk and Tumen to Perm, and one thousand pounds by the same route to St. Petersburg; 4. two hundred pounds from St. Petersburg to Hamburg and Wurzburg. In 1891, ten thousand pounds of graphite were extracted from the deposit on the river Nizhnaya Tougouzka for the recently formed Siberian Graphite Company.

In the government of Irkutsk a deposit of graphite was discovered in 1842 by Mr. Aliber in Boutogolsk Golts in the Tounkinsk mountains on the spot where the rivers Irkout, Kitoi, Belaya and Oka take their source. Here the graphite apparently occurs in reniform masses, in druses and in veins in alternate beds of crystalline limestone and laminar granite with quartz veins. In 1856 Aliber laid out the Mariinsk graphite mine on

this spot and obtained a graphite of excellent quality, and samples exhibited at the London Exhibition of 1862 proved it to be in many respects better than the English. Aliber entered into relations with the well known pencil maker Faber and began to supply him with considerable amounts of graphite. At the present day however this mine is only worked to supply graphite for making crucibles at the Irkutsk gold melting house.

### Naphtha.

The occurrence of naphtha has long been known on the northern extremity of the island of Saghalin, and it has now also been found near the gulf of Nabilsk, which is accessible to the largest ocean vessels. According to the researches of Mr. A. Batsevich, mining engineer, the naphtha deposits of this island extend in a meridional direction, towards the Sea of Okhotsk, where they occur at a distance of 5 to 25 versts from the shore. The specific gravity of the naphtha extracted from wells up to 3 sagenes deep over various areas, varies from 0.890 to 0.895, and the daily yield is several pouds. Judging from the specific gravity and the results obtained by distillation, the Saghalin naphtha resembles the Caucasian. The occurrence of naphtha springs over a considerable area, and their abundance, combined with the thickness of the superficial and subterranean deposits of bitumen (asphalt of recent formation) and the daily flow of naphtha in the wells, made Batsevich conclude that there must be more or less considerable stores of naphtha at a certain depth below the surface.

### Salt.

In Western Siberia salt is exclusively extracted from the self-depositing lakes, which occur in considerable numbers in the southern portion of the region, namely in the southern regions of the government of Tobolsk, in the south-western portion of the government of Tomsk, and in the Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk provinces. This area, which is included between 47° and 55° north latitude and 63° and 73° eastern longitude (from Paris) is a low lying plane, which was once the bottom of a sea basin. In the northern portion of this salt hasin, which embraces the Barabinsk and Kouloundinsk steppes, the salt lakes always contain a more or less considerable amount of other salts than common salt, the chief being sulphate of sodium. There is no lake in the region of these steppes, which gives pure chloride of sodium, and on the contrary, there are many which contain rich layers of glauber salt only. But in the southern and south-western portion of this salt hasin which embraces the arid steppes of the Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk provinces the deposited salt is in the majority of cases distinguished for purity of its chloride of sodium, and these lakes are the chief sources of its production.

The salt lakes of Western Siberia may be divided into four groups according to their characteristics: 1. The lakes which contain more or less considerable beds of chloride of

sodium covered with a brine which deposits fresh layers of salt every year. Compared with the others these lakes are the richest and are the most important by reason of the vast stores of salt they contain. Among the many lakes of this category belonging to the State the chief is the Karyakovsk lake in the province of Semipalatinsk at 20 versts from the town of Pavlodar and 28 versts from the Chernoyarsk landing stage on the river Irtysh. In this lake, which covers an area of about 20 square versts, the surface is covered by layers of salt for a space of about 9 square versts, and the thickness of these deposits reaches to as much as half a sagene. The annual yield of salt from this lake amounts to one million pouds. The salt from the Koryakovsk lake is distinguished for its high quality and is considered the best in Siberia. 2. The second category includes those lakes which contain considerable amounts of strong brine, which annually deposit a layer of pure chloride of sodium, varying from 1 to 4 inches in thickness. Although these lakes, compared with the preceding, have only a secondary importance, nevertheless they are capable of yielding immense quantities of salt. To this category belong the lakes exploited in the government of Tomsk, the most important of which are the Borovya and Bourlinsk lakes.

The Borovya lakes include four lakes: 1. the Pechatochnoe or Maloe Lomovoe; 2. the Kochkovatoe; 3. the Bolshoe Lomovoe; 4. the Malinovoe lakes. They are situated on what is called the Salt steppes. In recent years these lakes have yielded up to 600,000 pouds of salt. The Bourlinsk lake is one of most important sources of salt in Western Siberia. It resembles the Borovya lakes in the mode of occurrence of its salt and is only distinguished for its size, it being over 30 versts in circumference. The Bourlinsk lake belongs to the number of those which dry up periodically. There are many such lakes in Siberia. It has a great industrial importance, owing to its situation in proximity with the chief trading routes of the steppes, by which the peasants of the grain bearing regions of the government of Tomsk carry their grain to Pavlodar for sale to the Kirghiz. The salt from the Bourlinsk lake forms a return freight for these peasants who transport it to a further distance. Besides which, this salt is transported along the river Obi to Tomsk and further to Achinsk and to Eastern Siberia. The annual yield of the Bourlinsk lake is about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  million pouds. 3. The lakes of the third group are full of brine containing a greater or less amount of other salts, than chloride of sodium. They form a link towards bitter salt lakes. Owing to the comparatively little strength of the brine, the lakes of this category do not as a rule give a deposit every year but only under suitable atmospheric conditions, and the salt then obtained is naturally of a poor quality. These lakes, which are numerous and of large dimensions, now scarcely have any importance as a source of national provision. They could only give a pure salt, fit for consumption, if they were exploited by the artificial basin system, which owing to the number of excellent self-depositing lakes cannot as yet thrive in Siberia. To this category belong many lakes in the government of Tomsk, and all those situated in the Barabinsk steppe besides a considerable number of the Kirghiz lakes. 4. Lastly the fourth group comprises the bitter salt lakes, containing considerable layers of glauber salt which are constantly increasing in thickness owing to the annual deposition of fresh layers from the brine. The Bolshoe Marmyshansk lake is a representative of this category, and is the only one of this class now under exploitation. It yields about 100,000 pouds of salt a year. The Bolshoe and Maloe Marmyshansk lakes are situated in the Kouloundinsk

steppe at 200 versts distance to the south-west of Barnaoul, along the road to the Borovya lakes, and present immense deposits of glauber salt, whose thickness at a distance of 60 to 100 sagues from the shore is already two feet. Taking into account that the surface of the Bolshoe Marmyshansk lake is over 4 and of the Maloe over 2 square versts, the most moderate estimate gives a supply of not less than 50 million pouds in the former and 25 million pouds in the latter lake. The Marmyshansk salt is partly consumed at the soda works at Barnaoul, partly at the Altai works, which use it as a flux in smelting the argentiferous lead ores, and partly at the glass works.

Eastern Siberia abounds in salt, but the richest deposits of rock salt and the best salt springs, are situated in poorly inhabited localities, so that its transport to the markets owing to the want of proper means of communication is hampered by great difficulties which render it very expensive. Therefore many of the sources are not exploited and await the time when the economical conditions of the region will give the possibility of working them.

In the Yeniseisk and Irkutsk governments, salt is extracted from saline springs. In the government of Yeniseisk, at the Toumanshetsk works in the Kansk district and in the system of the river Birusa, the depth of the well is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  sagues, the strength of the brine  $4\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  Baumé, and in 1891, 17,500 pouds of salt were produced; at the Troitsk works in the same district, on the river Ousolka, a left tributary of the river Taseev, the production of salt in 1891 amounted to 514,000 pouds. Both deposits belong to the Devonian system and the brine flows from red salt-bearing marls and slags. In former days when the amount of salt mines and works in the Yeniseisk and Minousinsk regions was very limited, the Troitsk works played an important part in supplying the local inhabitants with salt.

In the government of Irkutsk there is an abundance of salt springs in the valley of the river Lena, between the stations of Kachougsk and Vitimsk; and also in the valley of the river Nepa, a left hand tributary of the Nizhnaya Toungouzka, where brine springs from reddish coloured sandstone, marl and clay formations, apparently of the Lower Devonian system. The exploitation of the salt is carried on at the Oust-Koutsk salt works, on the river Kouta at 4 versts distance from the Lena. The depth of the well is 3 sagues and the strength of the brine  $14-15^{\circ}$  Lamb; in 1891, 30,100 pouds of salt were produced. The Oustkoutsk works might considerably increase their yield but the market is very small, being limited to the sparsely populated localities of the Yakutsk province and to the Olekminsk gold workings. Apparently the same Devonian formations supply the brine which feeds the Irkutsk works in the village of Ousola at 70 versts distance from Irkutsk, down the Angara. The depth of the wells are 2—5 sagues; and of the borings, 89 sagues. The strength of the brine is  $6-7^{\circ}$  Baumé, and in the wells it is  $7\frac{1}{2}-9\frac{1}{2}$  Lamb. In 1891 the production of salt was 265,500 pouds. The salt produced at the Irkutsk works is sold at the Irkutsk government and Transbaikal territory, where it is in demand for salting the local fish omul with which the rivers falling into Baikal abound. At the Ilimsk works, near the settlement of Shestakovsk on the river Ilim, the right tributary of the Angara, the depth of the shafts is one to one and a half sagues, the strength of the brine  $8.73^{\circ}$  Lamb. In 1891, 85,100 pouds of salt were evaporated.

The salt deposits, representing the transition to lacustrine deposit, where the brine is extracted from excavations or wells dug in the bottom of salt lakes, occur in the Yeniseisk government, at the following works: 1. Abakansk in the Minousinsk district, 25 versts from the Bidzha ulus, the depth of the wells upon the bottom of the lake is 9 feet, the strength of the brine 9—13° Bome; 2. Altaisk, on the left bank of the Yenisei between the rivers Erba and white Ius, now abandoned, the lake having concentrated too much bitter salts; 3. Manzinsk, depth of wells 12 feet, strength of brine 5° Bome. The total production of these mines in 1891 did not exceed 93,800 pounds.

Besides the lakes mentioned, in which the cooperation of common salt is now established, the Yeniseisk government also contains a number of lakes with bitter salts, among which that of Minusinsk from its extent,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  square versts, and the quantity of salt contained in it belongs to the most considerable bitter lakes of Eastern Siberia. Formerly, up to 1877, salt was deposited by natural evaporation in the Minousinsk lake, although with a certain intermission, and with it almost the whole region of that name was supplied, there being then no salt works.

In the Yakutsk borderland, rock salt occurs in three spots of the Viluis district of the Yakutsk territory, along the right tributaries of the river Vilui. On the right bank of the river Kempendzai the deposit of rock salt forms a bed about 150 sagues in length and 50 in thickness. The salt is contained in red clay and is everywhere accompanied by plaster of Paris partly in crystals, partly in plates of white or greenish hue. In some places the projecting rocks of salt attain a height of 25 sagues; it is ordinarily white, although pieces of a rose colour occur. On the right bank of the river Kiundai not far from the lake Sikai-Sian, rock salt forms two masses in a mountain also consisting of red clay and gypsum. Finally, upon the right bank of the small stream Tabasyngda, a tributary of the river Tongo, also in red clay, at a depth of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet, lies rock salt of a dirty colour. During the spring inundations this salt is washed out of the banks in such quantities that the water in the stream acquires a brackish taste, as in the river Kempendzai. All three deposits apparently belong to the tertiary system. In the Viluis district of the Yakutsk territory, salt is obtained in winter by freezing the brine got from the salt springs of Baginsk on the river Pusty Iri, a left tributary of the Kempendzai, and Kempendzaisk on the river of that name a right tributary of the river Vilui. The strength of the brine reaches 20 to 25 per cent. The springs flow from a mountain probably containing beds of rock salt of tertiary age, judging from the propinquity of the above described deposits of the mineral. In 1891, 2,800 pounds of salt were won from the Baginsk spring and 16,000 from the Kempendzaisk.

In the Amour Governor-Generalship, salt is evaporated in the Transbaikal territory at the works of Selenginsk in the district of that name, and Kiransk in the Troitskosavsk district on the frontier of Mongolia. There the brine is derived from shafts, 2 to 3 sagues deep, dug in the bottom of salt lakes. The strength of the brine is 11 to 12° Bome. In 1891, 4,100 pounds of salt were got at the Selenginsk works and 23,300 pounds at those of Kiransk. In the Transbaikal territory occurs also lake Borzinsk where natural deposits of salt take place although not every year; in 1891, 19,800 pounds were extracted. Here must also be mentioned the Doroninsk lakes of the Bargouzinsk district of the Transbaikal territory, in which Glauber's

salt is obtained for the glass works. In 1891, 20,000 pouds of it were obtained. Formerly, glauber's salt was also extracted from the Torzhiransk lake in the Baikal mountains, near the Olkhonsk steppe d u m a, or seat of the local Tunguz administration.

The total yield of salt in Siberia both by natural evaporation and from salt works does not exceed, even under the best circumstances, two to three million pouds per annum, a quantity which it is obvious cannot meet the wants of the whole population of Siberia possessing as it does a considerable quantity of cattle.

The production of salt for the last ten years from the different governments was as follows.

| Year. | T o m s k. | Yeniseisk. | Irkutsk. | Transbai-<br>kal. | Yakutsk. | Semipal-<br>atinsk. | T o t a l. |
|-------|------------|------------|----------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|------------|
| 1881  | 1,073,225  | 159,660    | 393,351  | 4,359             | 8,064    | —                   | 1,638,659  |
| 1882  | 599,913    | 181,168    | 469,689  | 8,797             | 8,000    | 1,169,510           | 2,437,077  |
| 1883  | 600,000    | 177,753    | 460,519  | 22,341            | —        | 400,000             | 1,660,613  |
| 1884  | 743,989    | 147,504    | 577,098  | 29,021            | 18,000   | 474,840             | 1,991,452  |
| 1885  | 1,162,507  | 201,596    | 468,210  | 34,025            | —        | 397,108             | 2,263,446  |
| 1886  | 278,122    | 194,640    | 450,556  | 7,599             | —        | 353,415             | 1,284,332  |
| 1887  | 1,001,469  | 185,840    | 375,524  | —                 | —        | 470,897             | 2,033,730  |
| 1888  | 1,756,247  | 110,909    | 369,886  | 23,013            | 6,500    | 437,926             | 2,704,481  |
| 1889  | 678,496    | 152,927    | 359,805  | 43,829            | 9,000    | 914,093             | 2,158,150  |
| 1890  | 1,848,355  | 232,178    | 376,567  | 39,823            | 17,300   | 1,099,577           | 3,613,800  |
| 1891  | 512,692    | 194,966    | 380,721  | 47,244            | 18,800   | 598,664             | 1,753,087  |

From the enumeration of the territories in which salt is obtained, it is evident that immense areas of Siberia are almost destitute of their own salt and consequently must be satisfied with the imported article. Such for example are Semirechensk, Akmolinsk, the Littoral, Amour and other territories. Some of these regions possessing more or less convenient communications easily get over this difficulty, but others are frequently placed in an extremely embarrassing situation. For the avoidance of such a state of things the Government has long since recognized the necessity of taking upon itself the care of furnishing the population with salt, mainly that of Eastern Siberia and Amouria, as least favourably situated in reference to the supply of the mineral. With this view the Government has, in various places of the territory mentioned, depots of salt and stores in which the necessary supplies are always ready and given out at a very moderate price. Supplies collected by the Government authorities are then distributed in different directions as required. Independently of this and with the same view of better providing the people with salt, the Government recognized the possibility of allowing the Kirghiz of the Ural, Turgai, Akmolinsk and Semipalatinsk territories the free use of salt from the Crown lakes of the Kirghiz steppe. Moreover to the Siberian Cossack levies are issued 5,000 pouds of salt per annum from the Crown, free from any payment. This is taken straight from the Borovy lakes, the cost of carriage of the salt from these lakes to Semipalatinsk and Ust-Kamenogorsk being covered by a grant

from the Crown of 1,000 roubles per annum. Foreign salt is imported duty free into the Siberian ports of the Eastern Ocean. The total expenditure of the Crown upon this operation amounts annually to about 100,000 roubles.

### Precious minerals and building materials.

The best known place in all Siberia where precious minerals are found is the Transbaikalian territory. Here between the rivers Onon and Onon-Borza rises the granitic mountain Adun-Chilon, celebrated for the frequent discovery there of precious coloured stones, such as topaz, beryl, aquamarine, Siberian topaz and others. On the Onon, eighty-five versts from Nerchinsk are found garnets in small crystals.

Lapis lazuli occurs in the Baikal mountains along the rivers Talaya and Sliudianka, flowing into Baikal, and along the stream Malaya Bystraya, a tributary, of the Irkut. In the last locality lapis lazuli of good quality forms pockets in the large crystallised dolomitic limestone, near its junction with the syenitic granite. In the sixties pieces of lapis were worked here three pouds in weight. From these deposits was obtained the lapis lazuli which served for the veneering of the columns in the St. Isaac Cathedral in St. Petersburg, and for the execution of a mass of artistic productions placed in the Imperial palaces. In the same locality where occur the deposits of lapis lazuli, dark red garnets are met with in crystals attaining two inches in diameter, along the Bolshaya Bystraya amazon stone, sphene and feldspar of a crimson colour are found; along the Talaya, mica, serpentine, talc and other minerals; along the Sliudianka, blue calcareous spar, white marble, rose coloured quartz, garnet, asphinite and others; in the valley of the Uluntui, black mica in plates two feet in diameter. This kind of mica was formerly worked here.

Pebbles of nephrite are found along the river Bielaya falling into the Angara fifty versts below Irkutsk, and along the Iret and Onon, tributaries of the Bielaya. Here pebbles of this mineral used to be found weighing as much as 30 pouds.

The Altai mountains on the other hand, have become celebrated for their porphyry and jasper of various colours, forwarded from the Korgon ridge, from the banks of the Charysh and Alei and from the vicinity of the Ridder mine to the Kolyvan polishing works, whence manufactured articles are despatched over four thousand versts to the Imperial Court at St. Petersburg. At these works a mass of remarkable works of art have been turned out, which now embellish many of the Imperial palaces. Among them is the jasper vase placed in the Imperial Hermitage in St. Petersburg, the oval cup of which has a long diameter of twenty feet. At the present time not less than eight quarries are being worked in the Altai, producing porphyry, blue and green jasper, granite, white and coloured marbles breccia, smoky topaz, red, rose-coloured and blue quartz, agate and chalcedony.

Besides lime, building stone of various kinds, mill stones and common clays, got in many parts of Siberia, it should be mentioned that in the neighbourhood of the Nicholas cast-iron



works in the Irkutsk government, and also for the needs of several works in the Kirghiz steppes, fire-clay and fire-resisting sandstone are worked. The former is also obtained in the Yeniseisk government near the village of Kantat in the Krasnoyarsk district, near the village of Parilovaya in the Achinsk district, as also in the Irkutsk government along the river Bielaya. Kaolin and white clay for the porcelain works are worked in the Irkutsk government in several places. Feldspar and quartz for glass factories are obtained from several deposits in the Baikal mountains of the Irkutsk government.



## CHAPTER XII.

**Manufacturing industry and the home trade.**

Excisable industries, spirit, vodka, beer and mead; beet sugar, tobacco and matches; non-excisable productions; distribution of trade dues and statement of the turnover and profits of commercial and industrial undertakings; the exchange of wares between European Russia and Siberia; trade in the towns; fairs and their importance to Siberia.

**N**OTWITHSTANDING the wealth of Siberia in the productions of the three natural kingdoms, manufacturing industry has not been able here to develop itself to a corresponding extent on the one hand, in consequence of the scanty population of this vast territory, and on the other, on account of the lack of convenient and cheap communications. In view of this, in spite of the repeated attempts of the Government and of private persons to establish industry on a large scale in Siberia, manufactories and works have been started there only with great difficulty, and only those of them have had success which served to satisfy the local wants of a small population, or produced an article of such value that it might bear the cost of carriage to a great distance with profit.

The state of spirit distilling in Siberia appears from the following table.

|                              | Number of distilleries. | Amount distilled from: |           | Absolute alcohol, degrees in vedros. |            |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|------------|
|                              |                         | Grain.                 | Potatoes. | 1891.                                | 1892.      |
|                              |                         | P o u d s.             |           |                                      |            |
| Eastern Siberia . . . . .    | 19                      | 1,213,562              | —         | 50,278,500                           | 52,729,200 |
| Western » . . . . .          | 21                      | 1,408,908              | 55,391    | 58,866,300                           | 58,770,000 |
| Littoral and Amour territory | 1                       | 33,439                 | —         | 1,335,700                            | 1,599,000  |

Spirit in Eastern Siberia is mainly distilled from rye and wheat flour, a pound of the dry material yielding on an average 41.12 degrees of spirit. This industry is concentrated for the most part in the Irkutsk government, where in 1891, 20,800,000 degrees were produced, next in the Yeniseisk with 15,300,000 degrees, and in Transbaikalia, 14,200,000 degrees. In the Yakutsk territory distilling is entirely absent.

Of 21 distilleries in Western Siberia 9 are in the Tobolsk government, 11 in that of Tomsk and 1 in the territory of Semipalatinsk. Here as in Eastern Siberia the material used for distilling are rye and wheat flour as well as potatoes whose introduction has led to excellent results. On the whole a poud of raw material yields 41.44 degrees of spirit. Assuming the population of Western Siberia and the Kirgbiz steppes in accordance with the above quoted data at approximately four and a half million souls, it results that the consumption of spirit per head in this part of Siberia does not exceed 13 degrees per annum or one-third vedro of vodka, 40° proof. It is evident that the population of Siberia cannot be satisfied with such an insignificant quantity of spirit, and accordingly this defect is made good by the importation of spirit from the eastern governments of European Russia. In Eastern Siberia the consumption per head of spirit is approximately the same as in Western Siberia the deficiency being here supplied by importation from Odessa by sea. Yet if due account be taken of the isolation of many points of the Yakutsk and Littoral territories whither spirit penetrates only in rare cases, it is impossible not to allow that the consumption of spirit here per head must be distributed extremely unevenly, the greater part of the vodka being consumed by the town population.

The vodka industry in Siberia is very feebly developed and is almost confined to the production of refined spirit, the manufacture of various vodkas or liquors occupying a secondary place. In the 22 vodka distilleries in 1891 for the whole of Siberia only 41,370 vedros of various liquors were made.

Beer and mead brewing are also but feebly developed in Siberia. In 1891, 51 breweries in all were going, among which 19 also produced mead. These breweries were distributed as follows: in Eastern Siberia, 13; in Western Siberia, 24; and in the Littoral and Amour territories, 14. The total brew in them was as follows:

|                         |    |           |   |         |              |         |       |
|-------------------------|----|-----------|---|---------|--------------|---------|-------|
| Irkutsk . . . . .       | 3  | breweries | : | 26,600  | vedros beer; | 1040,   | mead. |
| Yeniseisk . . . . .     | 6  | »         | : | 27,000  | »            | »       |       |
| Transbaikal . . . . .   | 4  | »         | : | 8,500   | »            | »       |       |
| Tobolsk . . . . .       | 5  | »         |   |         |              |         |       |
| Tomsk . . . . .         | 12 | »         |   |         |              |         |       |
| Semipalatinsk . . . . . | 2  | »         |   |         |              |         |       |
| Akmolinsk . . . . .     | 6  | »         |   |         |              |         |       |
|                         |    |           | } | 200,000 | vedros beer; | 41,100, | mead. |

Thus, the local production of drinks subject to excise cannot satisfy the existing demand for them, and accordingly they, like spirit and vodkas, are imported from various parts of the Empire by land or by way of Odessa and Vladivostock.

The excise from various liquors amounted in 1891 to 10,841,960 roubles, of which Eastern Siberia produced 4,654,206 roubles worth, and Western Siberia 4,302,668 roubles, the Littoral and Amour territories 680,090 roubles, and the territories of Akmolinsk, Semipalatinsk, and Semirechensk, 1,204,996 roubles worth.

Tobacco culture, although universally introduced wherever climatic conditions permit, possesses no commercial importance, serving only for the satisfaction of the unexacting

taste of local consumers. Only the inferior sorts of tobacco are grown in kitchen gardens together with vegetables. During the last few years the crop of makhorka, bakun and similar qualities was as follows:

|                   | 1886   | 1887   | 1888   | 1889   | 1890   | 1891          |
|-------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|
| Eastern Siberia . | 26,308 | 31,510 | 28,736 | 26,713 | 28,410 | 32,758 pouds. |
| Western Siberia . | 33,967 | 33,895 | 33,121 | 37,902 | 35,498 | 40,872 »      |
| Total . .         | 60,275 | 65,405 | 61,857 | 64,615 | 63,908 | 73,630 pouds. |

In all Siberia there is but one tobacco manufactory with a section for makhorka, in which, in 1891, 3,400 pouds of tobacco were manufactured and banderoles issued to the amount of 44,592 roubles. The considerable demand for tobacco goods is supplied by the import of the latter from other parts of the Empire.

The sugar industry is a perfectly new enterprise in Siberia. It could never arise here independently, and accordingly the Government recognized the utility of offering the pioneers in this industry in Siberia certain privileges, as was also done in Turkestan and the Caucasus. With this object the following order was promulgated on the first of May, 1884. 1. Of the beet-sugar bakeries which shall be founded in Turkestan, in Siberia, or in Transcaucasus and shall begin operations before the 1st August, 1889, the first three such in each region enjoy in the course of nine consecutive sugar-baking seasons, privileges in the payment of excise. These privileges are offered to each of the said bakeries from the date of its opening upon the following bases: a. during the first four seasons the sugar bakery is freed altogether from the payment of excise on the whole of the sugar made in it; b. during the three following periods the existing excise is exacted to the extent of one-fifth; c. in the course of the two last privileged periods the excise is collected in the proportion of one-half. 2. In the course of the seasons of sugar baking, 1884 to 1885 and 1886 to 1887, authorization is given to extract sugar, syrup and molasses from sorghum and other sacchariferous plants besides, but without the payment of excise and license dues. The said manufacture may be conducted both in private sugar bakeries specially arranged for the purpose and in beet-sugar manufactories observing the rules established by the Ministry of Finance.

Thanks to this measure in 1890 the first beetsugar bakery was opened in the Minousinsk district of the Yeniseisk government. In 1890 only 8,450 pouds of beet were treated, but in 1891, 92,000 pouds from which 5,850 pouds of white sugar were obtained. The experience of two years completely convinced the initiators that the conditions of soil and climate of the Minousinsk district were perfectly adapted to the cultivation of the sugar beet, and accordingly the extension of the undertaking appears to be extremely advantageous.

Match manufacture is little developed in Siberia. There are here but 8 manufactories, 2 in Eastern Siberia and 6 in Western. The output in 1891 was:

|                                   |                      |                    |                     |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Eastern Siberia, with phosphorus: | 230,287,500 matches; | without phosphorus | 82,336,500 matches. |
| Western Siberia »                 | »                    | 3,614,159,250 »    | »                   |
|                                   |                      |                    | 37,383,750 »        |

Of the 6 manufactories of Western Siberia 2 are in Tobolsk, 3 in Tomsk and 1 in the Bisk district, and of the 2 manufactories in Eastern Siberia, one is in Irkutsk and the

other in the village of Ousolie. The first prepares exclusively Swedish matches, the second only simple lucifers. All the Siberian match manufactories get their phosphorus from Tou-pitsyn's works in Perm, the other raw materials being of local origin.

In all the industries named, about 3,000 workmen are employed annually, namely, in distilleries, 1,936; yeast manufactories, 14; vodka distilleries, 120; beer and mead breweries 254; the sugar bakery, 78; the tobacco manufactory, 78, and match manufactories, 330.

The total receipts of the treasury from all taxes on excisable industries, including therein excise, licenses and fines reaches 11,177,423 roubles, distributed according to different localities and manufactures in the following manner.

|                                                    | Spirits.   | Sugar. | Tobacco. | Petro-<br>leum. | Matches. | T o t a l. |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------|
| Eastern Siberia . . . .                            | 4,654,206  | 95     | 93,644   | —               | 14,700   | 4,762,645  |
| Western » . . . .                                  | 4,302,668  | —      | 42,504   | —               | 121,860  | 4,467,032  |
| Littoral and Amouria . .                           | 680,090    | —      | 12,398   | 9,930           | 29,088   | 731,506    |
| Akmolinsk, Semiretchensk,<br>Semipalatinsk . . . . | 1,204,996  | —      | 11,150   | —               | 94       | 1,216,240  |
| T o t a l . . . .                                  | 10,841,960 | 95     | 159,696  | 9,930           | 165,742  | 11,177,423 |

It is evident that this sum is too small for such an immense territory as Siberia, and there can be no doubt but that as a consequence of the considerable improvements in the communications, latterly, either carried out or projected, the manufactures above named, as ministering to the daily needs of the population, must assume more extensive dimensions.

The following are the industries not subject to the payment of excise, the returns being those for 1890:

| INDUSTRIES.                             | Western orig-<br>inal Siberia.             |                                                       | Eastern orig-<br>inal Siberia.             |                                                       | Amour-Litto-<br>ral border-<br>land.       |                                                       | Kirghiz<br>steppe border<br>land.          |                                                       | T o t a l.                                 |                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
|                                         | Number of man-<br>ufactories and<br>works. | Value of pro-<br>ductions, thous-<br>ands of roubles. | Number of man-<br>ufactories and<br>works. | Value of pro-<br>ductions, thous-<br>ands of roubles. | Number of man-<br>ufactories and<br>works. | Value of pro-<br>ductions, thous-<br>ands of roubles. | Number of man-<br>ufactories and<br>works. | Value of pro-<br>ductions, thous-<br>ands of roubles. | Number of man-<br>ufactories and<br>works. | Value of pro-<br>ductions, thous-<br>ands of roubles. |
| Hides, sheepskins,<br>and leather goods | 201                                        | 1,186                                                 | 38                                         | 350                                                   | 17                                         | 106                                                   | 55                                         | 405                                                   | 310                                        | 2,047                                                 |
| Metals . . . .                          | 5                                          | 187                                                   | 5                                          | 338                                                   | 2                                          | 46                                                    | —                                          | —                                                     | 12                                         | 571                                                   |
| Milling . . . .                         | 188                                        | 2,152                                                 | 13                                         | 284                                                   | 33                                         | 834                                                   | 150                                        | 1,005                                                 | 384                                        | 4,275                                                 |
| Tallow and soap<br>boiling. . . .       | 41                                         | 330                                                   | 4                                          | 29                                                    | 3                                          | 31                                                    | 56                                         | 380                                                   | 104                                        | 781                                                   |
| Timber sawing. .                        | —                                          | —                                                     | 3                                          | 27                                                    | —                                          | —                                                     | —                                          | —                                                     | 3                                          | 27                                                    |

| INDUSTRIES.                                                                          | Western original Siberia.          |                                             | Eastern original Siberia.          |                                             | Amour-Littoral borderland.         |                                             | Kirghiz-steppe borderland.         |                                             | Total.                             |                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                      | Number of manufactories and works. | Value of productions, thousands of roubles. | Number of manufactories and works. | Value of productions, thousands of roubles. | Number of manufactories and works. | Value of productions, thousands of roubles. | Number of manufactories and works. | Value of productions, thousands of roubles. | Number of manufactories and works. | Value of productions, thousands of roubles. |
| Candles(tallow and wax). . . . .                                                     | 11                                 | 56                                          | 5                                  | 52                                          | 3                                  | 28                                          | 2                                  | 9                                           | 21                                 | 145                                         |
| Brick and lime burning . . . .                                                       | 12                                 | 19                                          | 16                                 | 41                                          | 2                                  | 3                                           | 5                                  | 6                                           | 35                                 | 69                                          |
| Porcelain, faience and glass. . . .                                                  | 3                                  | 65                                          | 7                                  | 280                                         | 2                                  | 18                                          | —                                  | —                                           | 12                                 | 363                                         |
| Cloth, wool washing and felt . . . .                                                 | 13                                 | 218                                         | 1                                  | 57                                          | —                                  | —                                           | 1                                  | 40                                          | 15                                 | 315                                         |
| Saltworks and salt grinding . . . .                                                  | —                                  | —                                           | 10                                 | 330                                         | 2                                  | 20                                          | —                                  | —                                           | 12                                 | 350                                         |
| Confectionery, molasses and preserves . . . . .                                      | 7                                  | 42                                          | 2                                  | 14                                          | —                                  | —                                           | 3                                  | 34                                          | 12                                 | 90                                          |
| Chemical, vinegar . . . . .                                                          | 1                                  | 44                                          | 1                                  | 6                                           | —                                  | —                                           | —                                  | —                                           | 2                                  | 50                                          |
| Ropewalks . . . . .                                                                  | —                                  | —                                           | 5                                  | 6                                           | —                                  | —                                           | —                                  | —                                           | 5                                  | 6                                           |
| Writing paper. . . . .                                                               | 1                                  | 236                                         | —                                  | —                                           | —                                  | —                                           | —                                  | —                                           | 1                                  | 236                                         |
| Oil mills and cheese making . . . .                                                  | 30                                 | 52                                          | —                                  | —                                           | —                                  | —                                           | 5                                  | 9                                           | 35                                 | 61                                          |
| <b>Total. . . . .</b>                                                                | <b>513</b>                         | <b>4,598</b>                                | <b>109</b>                         | <b>1,824</b>                                | <b>64</b>                          | <b>1,083</b>                                | <b>278</b>                         | <b>1,888</b>                                | <b>963</b>                         | <b>9,393</b>                                |
| Small works, not included in above, with production less than 1,000 roubles. . . . . | 771                                |                                             | 56                                 |                                             | 24                                 |                                             | 577                                |                                             | 1,428                              |                                             |

From this table it appears that the total production of the Siberian manufactories and works does not reach 9,500,000 roubles, and that the first place among the manufacturing industries belongs to milling, 45 per cent; the second, to the leather and sheepskin trade, after which follow tallow and soap boiling, metals, et cetera. These industries are very unevenly distributed over the different regions. Western Siberia is alone distinguished by a great variety of productions, whose output amounts to 4,600,000 roubles. The opposite position is occupied by the Amour-Littoral borderland, whose production is about one million roubles. On the whole the manufacturing industry of Siberia is at present in an embryonic condition. Different industries arise and develop merely for the satisfaction of local requirements, in consequence of which the business of industrial and commercial undertakings of Siberia are extremely limited.

All the trade dues of Siberia scarcely amount to one million roubles, which includes the receipts on first and second guild certificates, retail trade and other licenses, market carrier dues, additional taxes to the services connected with lodgings, and the supplementary dues, three per cent on share undertakings and assessed tax on guild and non-guild concerns.

The incidence of these taxes according to different articles and governments in 1889 is shown in the following table.

| Taxes:                          | Amour territory. | Littoral territory. | Yeniseisk gov. | Transbaikal territory. | Irkutsk gov. | Tobolsk gov. | Tomsk gov. | Semipalatinsk territory. | Semirechensk territory. |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| First guild . . .               | 8,445            | 6,435               | 8,428          | 22,915                 | 23,750       | 20,290       | 11,257     | 1,665                    | 1,005                   |
| Second > . . .                  | 9,479            | 20,631              | 46,368         | 50,338                 | 52,872       | 50,425       | 82,646     | 17,780                   | 22,068                  |
| Retail trade . . . <sup>6</sup> | 2,084            | 2,908               | 17,988         | 6,728                  | 17,114       | 39,829       | 25,392     | 3,118                    | 10,680                  |
| Trade certificates              | 437              | 209                 | 1,036          | 813                    | 553          | 3,125        | 2,159      | 577                      | 617                     |
| Clerk >                         | 5,460            | 9,231               | 17,761         | 21,954                 | 24,435       | 25,546       | 34,532     | 7,994                    | 11,378                  |
| Carrier >                       | 464              | 1,720               | 2,792          | 2,280                  | 1,456        | 5,224        | 8,568      | 2,384                    | 2,808                   |
| Peddler >                       | 102              | 183                 | 390            | 342                    | 195          | 822          | 2,955      | 372                      | 294                     |
| Fair dues . . . . .             | —                | —                   | 435            | 1,492                  | 705          | 5,524        | 3,557      | 4,200                    | 28                      |
| Fines . . . . .                 | 424              | 988                 | 5,017          | 1,675                  | 2,119        | 5,520        | 4,270      | 543                      | 2,214                   |
| Special taxes . .               | —                | —                   | 7,810          | 13,009                 | 10,205       | 18,158       | 14,032     | 3,190                    | 3                       |
| Supplementary dues:             |                  |                     |                |                        |              |              |            |                          |                         |
| Three per cent .                | 201              | —                   | 316            | 119                    | —            | 1,317        | 316        | —                        | —                       |
| Assessed taxes .                | —*               | —*                  | 9,118          | —*                     | 22,298       | 23,502       | 29,059     | —*                       | —*                      |
|                                 | 28,721           | 44,772              | 119,675        | 125,698                | 156,927      | 198,688      | 222,327    | 43,343                   | 53,633                  |

As the assessed tax is only imposed in the four most important governments of Siberia, data on business done and profits received are only to be had for these governments, and, even so, only in respect to guild, industrial and commercial undertakings.

In the two following tables is set forth the distribution of guild undertakings according to the nature of the industry or trade in the said four governments of Siberia, with a statement of the turnover, profit and average lucrativeness for each separately for 1889

\* Not collected.

| INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS.                 | Irkutsk and Yeniseisk. |                       |                | Tomsk and Tobolsk. |                       |                | The four governments. |                       |                |                          |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
|                                          | Number.                | Thousands of roubles. |                | Number.            | Thousands of roubles. |                | Number.               | Thousands of roubles. |                | Average profit per cent. |
|                                          |                        | Yearly turnover.      | Yearly profit. |                    | Yearly turnover.      | Yearly profit. |                       | Yearly turnover.      | Yearly profit. |                          |
| Hemp manufactures, mats . . . . .        | —                      | —                     | —              | 1                  | 15                    | 0.75           | 1                     | 15                    | 0.75           | 5                        |
| Woollen » . . . . .                      | 1                      | 20                    | 1.6            | 4                  | 188.4                 | 8.81           | 5                     | 205.4                 | 10.41          | 5.07                     |
| Cotton . . . . .                         | —                      | —                     | —              | 1                  | 5                     | 0.5            | 1                     | 5                     | 0.5            | 10                       |
| Chemicals and cosmetics . . . . .        | —                      | —                     | —              | 4                  | 68                    | 3.2            | 4                     | 68                    | 3.2            | 4.71                     |
| Tallow, wax . . . . .                    | —                      | —                     | —              | 33                 | 497.1                 | 38.03          | 33                    | 497.1                 | 38.03          | 7.65                     |
| Leather, etc. . . . .                    | 4                      | 135                   | 11.6           | 49                 | 1,150.3               | 94.63          | 53                    | 1,285.3               | 106.23         | 8.26                     |
| Glass, porcelain, pottery . . . . .      | 4                      | 160                   | 11.9           | 6                  | 133                   | 12.58          | 10                    | 285.8                 | 24.48          | 8.56                     |
| Metals, machinery . . . . .              | —                      | —                     | —              | 8                  | 248                   | 15.15          | 8                     | 248                   | 15.15          | 6.11                     |
| Flour mills . . . . .                    | 3                      | 70                    | 5.95           | 32                 | 836.2                 | 60.45          | 35                    | 906.2                 | 66.4           | 7.33                     |
| Foodstuffs . . . . .                     | 4                      | 120                   | 10.9           | 19                 | 111.9                 | 10.15          | 23                    | 231.9                 | 21.05          | 9.08                     |
| Liquors . . . . .                        | 8                      | 691.5                 | 53.01          | 11                 | 170                   | 10.5           | 19                    | 861.5                 | 63.51          | 7.37                     |
| Printing, lithography . . . . .          | 7                      | 39                    | 5.3            | 10                 | 36.3                  | 5.98           | 17                    | 75.3                  | 11.28          | 14.98                    |
| Photography . . . . .                    | 4                      | 13.5                  | 1.42           | 7                  | 14.6                  | 1.8            | 11                    | 28.1                  | 3.22           | 11.46                    |
| Clothes . . . . .                        | —                      | —                     | —              | 5                  | 32                    | 1.5            | 5                     | 32                    | 1.5            | 4.7                      |
| Bakeries, confectioners, shops . . . . . | —                      | —                     | —              | 3                  | 27                    | 1.4            | 3                     | 27                    | 1.4            | 5.18                     |
| Various . . . . .                        | 1                      | 51.2                  | 5.12           | —                  | —                     | —              | 1                     | 51.2                  | 5.12           | 10                       |
| Total . . . . .                          | 36                     | 1,300.2               | 105.8          | 193                | 3,539.8               | 265.43         | 229                   | 4,822.8               | 372.23         | 7.72                     |



| TRADING UNDERTAKINGS.                                 | Irkutsk and Yeniseisk. |                    |                    | Tomsk and Tobolsk. |                    |                    | The four governments. |                    |                    |                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
|                                                       | Number                 | Yearly turnover.   | Yearly profit.     | Number             | Yearly turnover.   | Yearly profit.     | Number                | Yearly turnover.   | Yearly profit.     | Average profit. |
|                                                       |                        | Thousands roubles. | Thousands roubles. |                    | Thousands roubles. | Thousands roubles. |                       | Thousands roubles. | Thousands roubles. | Per cent.       |
| Woolens cottons, haberdashery, and sundries . . . . . | 883                    | 13,752.5           | 1,036.1            | 970                | 8,451.1            | 585.85             | 1,853                 | 22,203.7           | 1,621.93           | 7.3             |
| Ready made clothes, linen . . . . .                   | 11                     | 422                | 30.52              | 14                 | 376                | 27.55              | 25                    | 798                | 58.07              | 7.28            |
| Grocery, colonial wares . . . . .                     | 58                     | 3,079.5            | 233.46             | 350                | 6,168.9            | 366.51             | 408                   | 9,248.4            | 599.97             | 6.49            |
| Meat, greens, fowls. . . . .                          | 19                     | 108.5              | 8.87               | 150                | 1,170.8            | 102.86             | 169                   | 1,279.3            | 111.43             | 8.71            |
| Grain and flour . . . . .                             | 37                     | 676.7              | 65.23              | 103                | 1,905.3            | 123.63             | 140                   | 2,582              | 188.86             | 7.31            |
| Flax, hemp, ropes . . . . .                           | —                      | —                  | —                  | 8                  | 544                | 23.4               | 8                     | 544                | 23.4               | 4.3             |
| Metals, tools, machinery . . . . .                    | 25                     | 957                | 71.55              | 62                 | 985                | 56.15              | 87                    | 1,942.5            | 127.7              | 6.57            |
| Mechanical, optical and surgical appliances. . . . .  | 1                      | 25                 | 1.25               | 2                  | 65                 | 3                  | 3                     | 90                 | 4.25               | 4.72            |
| Gold, silver, bronze articles. . . . .                | 7                      | 345                | 26.93              | 4                  | 67                 | 3.06               | 11                    | 412                | 31.99              | 7.59            |
| Porcelain, faience, glass . . . . .                   | 9                      | 255                | 11.44              | 10                 | 99.5               | 7.15               | 19                    | 354.5              | 18.59              | 5.24            |
| Furniture, carpentry . . . . .                        | —                      | —                  | —                  | 1                  | 35                 | 1.75               | 1                     | 35                 | 1.75               | 5               |
| Timber, wood fuel . . . . .                           | 3                      | 55                 | 4.6                | 12                 | 90                 | 8.6                | 15                    | 145                | 13.2               | 9.1             |
| Paper, cardboard, wallpaper . . . . .                 | 1                      | 20                 | 1.6                | 1                  | 60                 | 3                  | 2                     | 80                 | 4.6                | 5.75            |
| Leather, harness, shoes, boots . . . . .              | 9                      | 577.5              | 41.5               | 63                 | 1,392.9            | 108.2              | 72                    | 1,970.4            | 149.7              | 7.59            |
| Soap, illuminants, matches . . . . .                  | 3                      | 32                 | 1.74               | 8                  | 210                | 8                  | 11                    | 242                | 9.74               | 4.02            |
| Chemicals, dry good, drugs . . . . .                  | 12                     | 154.9              | 16.24              | 19                 | 140.4              | 21.1               | 31                    | 2,295.3            | 37.34              | 12.64           |
| Hotels, restaurants, drinkshops. . . . .              | 535                    | 1,477.6            | 141.23             | 715                | 1,508.6            | 142.1              | 1,250                 | 2,986.8            | 283.33             | 9.49            |
| Spirit and beer stores. . . . .                       | 216                    | 3,636.3            | 342.57             | 345                | 2,991.1            | 254.88             | 561                   | 6,617.4            | 597.45             | 9.03            |
| Tobacco shops . . . . .                               | 3                      | 100                | 7                  | 2                  | 55                 | 2.95               | 5                     | 155                | 9.95               | 6.41            |
| Offices, agencies. . . . .                            | 7                      | 280                | 32.21              | 35                 | 4,710              | 367.8              | 42                    | 4,990              | 400.01             | 8.02            |
| Contracts . . . . .                                   | 10                     | 310                | 20.35              | 9                  | 221.1              | 12.3               | 19                    | 531.1              | 32.65              | 6.15            |
| Carriers . . . . .                                    | 37                     | 2,403.8            | 195.27             | 17                 | 402                | 32.9               | 54                    | 2,805.8            | 228.17             | 8.13            |
| Various . . . . .                                     | 41                     | 1,456.8            | 98.06              | 5                  | 20                 | 0.95               | 46                    | 1,476.8            | 99.01              | 6.7             |
| Total . . . . .                                       | 1,927                  | 30,115.1           | 2,387.70           | 2,905              | 31,679.7           | 2,265.37           | 4,832                 | 61,785             | 4,653.09           | 7.53            |

The above table shows at a glance what goods form the subject of home trade. In the forefront appear woollen and cotton goods swallowing up 36 per cent of the annual turnover; next follow groceries 15 per cent, liquors 11 per cent, and others. Thus the chief strength of Siberian trade is concentrated in provisions, clothing and shoes. Part of these goods is prepared on the spot, but a considerable proportion is imported ready made from European Russia.

To elucidate the character of the exchange between Siberia and European Russia, it is necessary to turn to the returns of the Ural Railway, or rather to those of two of its stations, Tiumen and Tura, which no freight escapes in whichever direction it is going. On examining the goods traffic over the said line, it is not difficult to see that the principal mass, going in the direction of the basin of the Volga, is composed of raw materials and half manufactured productions of agriculture and cattle rearing, while in the opposite direction to the basin of the Obi go principally the productions of manufacturing industry. In the first case the chief articles are grain, flour, flax and linseed, tow, nuts, tallow, butter, hair, wool, hides, skins, furs; in the second, cloth, haberdashery, groceries, dry goods, metals, porcelain, glass, spirit, sugar, tobacco, mineral oils. The goods of the latter kind forwarded to Siberia through Tiumen and Tura amounted in 1888 to 2,269,000 pouds, in 1889 to 2,299,000 pouds, in 1890 to 2,587,000 pouds. In the contrary direction, that is, towards European Russia, these stations forwarded in 1888, 4,799,000 pouds, in 1889, 3,676,000 pouds, and in 1890, 4,787,000 pouds. The returns for 1891 as well as certain details on the goods traffic are given further on under the description of the water ways, as up to the present time this system of conveyance is almost the sole existing.

Passing to a review of the most important trade centres, it must be observed that the scanty population scattered over the boundless expanse of this country by virtue of historical and still more geographical conditions could not be concentrated in large centres and therefore in Siberia to the present day there are but 28 towns counting more than 5,000 inhabitants. Of these the most largely populated are Irkutsk 44,000, Tomsk 40,000, Omsk 34,000, Vierny 25,000, Tobolsk 20,000, and Semipalatinsk 18,000.

The home trade is mainly concentrated in the towns named and consists partly in the barter of the raw materials produced by the natives, partly in the sale for cash. It is everywhere in the hands of a few persons, who availing themselves of the difficulty of communications and the absence of competition in consequence of this, not seldom raise the prices exorbitantly upon all goods, especially woollens and cottons. Some years ago a corner was arranged among several liquor merchants, and the prices of alcohol rose so high, that the Government thought good to despatch a considerable party of spirit from Odessa to Vladivostok, for sale there in the Government warehouses at a fixed price and thus compel the ring to return to the normal course of business, a result which ensued in the shortest possible time. What kind of goods are for sale appears from the trade returns quoted above. It must be observed that trade has not always a constant character but often becomes more lively at certain times and places during fairs.

Fairs in Siberia possess a great importance and they are there very numerous, but their business is not great. The existence of these institutions is dependent upon the inadequacy of communications, the difficulty of transport, the inconveniences of frequent travelling

and other such circumstances which compel the traders to assemble at a determined time and place, whither merchants come together from every part with their goods.

The most ancient and important Siberian fair is that of Irbit, founded in 1643, administratively forming part of the government of Perm, that is, of European Russia, but geographically an integral part of Siberian territory. Situated at the confluence of the Irbit and the Nitsa, tributaries of the Tura, Irbit forms the half-way house for a number of routes. The fair there is open from the 1st of February to the 1st of March, and for this month the little town wakes up and welcomes 12,000 to 15,000 strangers, doing a business of 40,000,000 to 50,000,000 roubles each time. In 1868 various goods were brought to this town to the amount of 37,311,000 roubles, of which 34,359,000 roubles worth were sold; in 1876, the figures were 49,029,000 and 45,987,000 roubles respectively; in 1891, 45,896,200 and 39,302,700 roubles. The decline in the turnover of the Irbit fair here perceptible is in direct dependence upon the completion of the Ural and Samara-Zlatoust railways. The opening of the Great Siberian Railway will undoubtedly still further diminish the importance of this fair. The chief articles of trade there, after tea, are peltry, honey, wax, nuts, hardware and cutlery, woollens and cottons. The wares for sale here are mostly of Russian origin, although foreign productions from both Europe and Asia are not unknown. In 1891 Russian goods were imported to the amount of 39,274,000 roubles, including in this sum 6,062,000 roubles of Asiatic wares, of which 34,058,000 roubles worth were sold. The corresponding figures for foreign productions were 6,622,000 roubles and 5,245,000 roubles respectively.

The chief article of commerce in the Irbit fair, tea, will be discussed further on. As far as regards fur goods, it may be observed that already now with the approach of the general railway system to the water systems of Siberia the most valuable goods of this kind are forwarded direct to Moscow, without passing through Irbit. Thus, in January of the current year, 1893, a party of sable of 1,700 skins was forwarded to Moscow and sold there for 100,000 roubles. Judging by the course taken by fur goods for some years past, it may be confidently expected that with the building of the western section of the Great Siberian Railway the whole of the fur goods from the basin of the Obi will be forwarded direct to Moscow. In the current year there were 5,450,000 squirrel skins brought to the fair, and 1,500,000 hare skins. The sale of sable was 3,600 skins at 60 to 75 roubles apiece. Light sable was offered to the number of 30,000 skins. There was further a large show of arctic fox, 25,000 skins, *krestovatik*, *neklui*, and other furs. A considerable portion of the furs at the Irbit fair is acquired for foreign export, namely, all the ermine, *kolonoks*, *krestovatiks*, bears, marmot, hares, squirrel tails, black and striped cat for Leipzig, sable for Leipzig, Paris and London, squirrel, wolf and fox, for Leipzig.

Combining the above data with the returns on the seal trade, it may be seen that the trade in Russian furs, and particularly in the more valuable kinds, is principally concentrated in London and Leipzig. Both these markets receive from Russia the goods in the raw state and often return them finished, although they most frequently are disposed of in other countries.

Another fair in the same government of Perm, but on Siberian territory, is *Krestovsko Ivanovskaya*. By the business done there it occupies the next place to that of Irbit. It opens

on the 20th of August and continues 15 days, that is to the 5th of September. In 1868 goods to the value of 4,397,000 roubles were brought to this fair, of which 3,794,000 roubles worth were sold; in 1876 the business doubled, the figures being respectively 8,650,000 and 6,552,000 roubles; in 1891, the business again declined, the goods brought amounting to 5,756,000 roubles; in 1892, there was a further fall, to 4,942,000, of which only 3,783,000 roubles worth were sold.

The third considerable Siberian fair, the Nikolsk, takes place in Ishim in December, from the 1st to the 25th, and has a special object. Here is carried on the trade in the produce of stock breeding, mainly tallow, butter and hides. The total business of the fair amounts from four to five million roubles per annum. The Nikolsk fair determines the prices for tallow and the character of the trade in this article, although the latter is for sale in many other fairs. The total offer in the winter is as much as one million pouds of tallow, the greater part of which is forwarded to the port of St. Petersburg for export, chiefly to England. During recent years, however, in consequence of the enlivenment of manufactures based upon tallow within the Empire, the destination of this article has somewhat altered. Tallow is not only obtained from the local cattle, but most of all from cattle driven from the Kirghiz steppes to the fair near lake Toinchi-Kul in the territory of Akmolinsk. At this fair about half a million head of small cattle and about 100,000 head of large cattle are sold.

Fully half a million roubles worth of butter is brought to the Ishim fair, where it is bought up principally for Moscow, St. Petersburg and Rostov-on-Don. The butter is taken from the fair to Ekaterinburg, the centre of this trade. Here it is melted, clarified and forwarded in the summer per raft by the Kama to St. Petersburg and Rostov, and in winter it goes to Moscow in the form of *kolo h o v o e*. Besides the three fairs considered, possessing importance exclusively for Siberia, several others may be pointed out, in Perm and in the neighbouring government of Orenburg, in the district of Cheliabinsk. At these fairs the chief trade is in Siberian produce and goods destined for Siberia. Independently of this in Siberia itself there are reckoned more than 160 fairs, of which in the government of Tobolsk 95, in the territory of Akmolinsk 30, in the government of Tomsk 19, in the territory of Semipalatinsk 13, in that of Transbaikal 11, in the government of Yeniseisk 8, in that of Irkutsk 9, et cetera. They last not less than three days.

In the small Aniuisk fort in the Kolymsk district of the Yakutsk territory there annually assembles the so-called Chukche Fair which brings together for the purposes of trade and the payment of *y a s a k*, or the tax in furs, natives belonging to the most various tribes. Among them are the three divisions of the Chukches, Olenny, Nosovy and Anadyr, and representatives of the Toungouz, Lashuts, Yakutsk, and Chuvans. The Chukche Fair however has latterly been less frequented, the inhabitants of the Coast finding it possible to exchange their productions for American goods brought them in the shape of contraband in the whalers. This illicit trade is accompanied by frightful exploitation of the native population and their depravement by drink. Various measures have been taken by the local government authorities to combat this evil.

In the territory of Semipalatinsk the trade is mainly carried on between the Cossacks

and peasants on the one hand, and the Kirghiz on the other. In the first case it is on a cash basis, in the second on that of barter.

In the Akmolinsk territory the chief subject of trade is cattle and their produce. In 30 local fairs in 1889 business was done in these articles to an amount of 8,000,000 roubles.

Trade with the natives in the Littoral territory is somewhat peculiarly situated. Almost all the natives are here in dependence on traders of different nationalities. Gols and Oroches have fallen under the influence of the Chinese. The latter supply them goods on credit, but secure themselves the whole of the native's future take of furs, getting the same for a trifle. The Tunguses are in the same dependence on the Yakut traders. As regards the shore tract and Kamchatka, here it is the Russian element that predominates.

In the territory of the Amour, chiefly at the confluence of the large tributaries Zeya and Bureya with the Amour, native fairs with barter take place. The best known on account of the extent of its commercial transactions is the Kiman native gathering on the Bureya. Here 3,000 sables are sold annually fetching 60,000 roubles, and other furs to the amount of 10,000 roubles. In the total for 1889 the imports into the Amour territory of Russian goods amounted to 2,500,000 roubles; and foreign, 1,000,000 roubles, or in all, 3,500,000 roubles.



## CHAPTER XIII.

**The Foreign trade of Siberia.**

The Far East in reference to customs; the import and export of Russian and foreign goods; Vladivostock and Nikolaevsk; trade with China across the land frontier; ports of the Arctic Ocean; the Commander Islands; tea trade over the European and Asiatic frontiers; Bohea and brick teas; freights; tea traffic by rail; western China and Turkestan.

THE vast territory of Siberia is washed on the north along an immense extent by the Arctic Ocean, and therefore on this side during the greater part of the year it is closed for navigation, and even during the season of navigation nature in the polar zone offers so many inconveniences to the establishment of regular navigation that up to the present time the appearance of steamers on the northern coast of Siberia is more or less accidental, not yet possessing any industrial importance.

The eastern zone, bathed by the waters of the Pacific Ocean and possessing for the greater part a more moderate climate, has many advantages over the northern. Here indeed, during the brief period since the establishment of the Russian dominion, an increased movement in the shipping has been observed, accompanied by a more lively trade. On the south, Siberia is conterminous with Manchuria, Mongolia and China. Here there are several land routes, by which the exchange of goods takes place between Russia and the countries named. The development of trade relations with the Chinese Empire always formed the subject of special anxiety to the Russian Government, striving to negotiate various privileges for this trade and to open to it new markets within the limits of the Chinese dominions. In the middle of the present century, besides the commercial relations taking place on the basis of the Treaty of Kiakhta (1727) through Kiakhta and Urga, trade was opened by the Kuldzha Convention (1851) on the side of Ilya aud Tarbagatai. Subsequently the Aikhun Treaty (1858) authorized mutual trade to the subjects of both countries, living along the rivers Amour, Ussuri, and Sunguri, while that of Thian-Tzin (1858) granted Russia the right to carry on trade not only by land but also by sea in the ports opened to foreigners. Finally by the treaty of St. Petersburg (1881) the districts lying on both slopes of the Thian-Shan, as well as Su-Chow, were opened to Russia. Both in these districts and in Mongolia, Russian subjects may trade duty free. Upon goods forwarded to the provinces of the interior and exported therefrom, the Chinese authorities impose import and export customs dues.

In consequence of the sparse population of Eastern Siberia and the inadequacy of its communications, on the one hand, and with the object, on the other, of affording new settlers certain privileges for getting necessary provisions and implements of labour, it was thought best from the very beginning of the annexation of the Amour territory to authorize free foreign trade in the Kamchatka region (1855), and in the ports of the Amour region and the Island of Saghalin (1857). It was at the same time declared that foreign goods might enter free of duty in Russian vessels, and ascend the Amour without any restriction. Foreign vessels on the other hand were not permitted to navigate the Amour higher than the Mariinsk Post, even under the Russian flag. It was soon thought advisable to extend the right to free trade in foreign goods granted to the Amour region to all the ports of the Littoral territory of Eastern Siberia, which was done in 1860.

On the review in 1862 of the statute on the organization of the customs office in Eastern Siberia it was defined that European and Colonial goods forwarded through the ports of the Littoral and Amour territories on arriving at the Irkntsk customshouse are subject to the payment of customs duties on the basis of the general customs tariff on European trade. From goods however despatched by the route mentioned, and intended for consumption within the limits of the said territories, customs duties as before were not exacted. Subsequently certain exceptions were admitted in this respect, and from 1867 the import of intoxicants was made dutiable, and from 1887 tobacco goods were also brought under this exception. Next, on nearer acquaintance with the position of the home trade of Eastern Siberia and in the interests of the normal development of the national industry, it was found necessary to impose customs duties upon all imported foreign goods which are subject to excise within the country. This measure was called into existence among other things by the abnormal direction taken by our export trade. Goods subject to excise and destined for export from European Russia into Eastern Siberia were declared as exported abroad, the exporter receiving in the shape of drawback the whole of the excise paid by him and in some cases a premium on the export. These goods were then imported as foreign into the ports of the Littoral. Thus in order to obtain the premium on sugar it was necessary to forward it first to some foreign point, for example Port Said, and then import it as foreign into Vladivostok. Something of the same kind took place in the tobacco trade. Hamburg traders taking advantage of the circumstance that Russian tobacco goods on shipment abroad do not bear any internal excise began to order them in St. Petersburg and despatch them to Vladivostok as German productions. If these goods were forwarded direct from the interior governments of the Empire to Vladivostok without *banderole* they had to pay export in that port. Approximately the same thing took place in reference to other goods, such as petroleum illuminants, matches, et cetera. Thus Russian productions in the Russian ports of the Pacific Ocean were in a depressed state, which of course could not be regarded as normal or desirable. To regulate the trade, and at the same time preserve to Eastern Siberia its privileged position, as regards the duty free enjoyment of foreign productions, from 1888 the ports of the Eastern strip of Siberia were opened for the duty free importation of all goods with the exception of the following: sugar, molasses, confectionery, jam, fruit in syrup, in liqueurs et cetera, arrack, rum, French brandy, spirituous liquors imported in bottles, gin, whiskey, wines made from grapes, mead, porter, mineral

illuminating oils, paraffin lubricating oil, spirit and oil polishes and matches. To the articles named, when imported into the ports of the Littoral territory, the actual customs tariff on the European frontier is extended. Tobacco goods of foreign origin imported by sea into Vladivostok and Nikolaevsk, as well as Russian, not bearing the legal banderoles, are made to pay duty on the basis of the general tariff at the European frontier. The collection of the duties upon goods imported into the ports of the Littoral territory, on account of the absence there of customs institutions, is imposed upon the officials of the local excise control. On the publication of the law quoted, imposing import duties on certain goods, the question arose as to whether duties should be taken from the foreign goods enumerated above when imported into the Commander Islands, and into Petropavlovsk, and other northern ports of the Littoral territory, for which no special exceptions are established. Taking into consideration the poverty of the population of the northern zone of the said territory and of the islands of the Pacific Ocean and also the total absence there of excise officials, it was thought advisable in 1889 to limit the exaction of customs duties from certain foreign goods imported into the ports of the territory of the Littoral to the ports of Vladivostok and Nikolaevsk, with the condition that the exaction of such duties should be effected on the same general basis from the goods also that may be imported into the said ports from other ports of the Littoral territory.

Thus up to the present time the immense territory of Eastern Siberia continues to remain in the position of a free port for the mass of foreign goods, which however does not offer any danger for the importation of duty free merchandise through Eastern into Western Siberia and further into the interior of the Empire.

Notwithstanding the natural wealth of Siberia and the favourable climatic conditions existing in many localities, its productivity in consequence of its scant population and absence of communications is extremely insignificant, and it is in need of the importation from without of many such essential articles, as under other circumstances might be successfully produced upon the spot. Siberia is mainly furnished with the necessary productions by importation from the following countries.

From European Russia it receives cheap cottons and woollens, tobacco, spirit, sugar, illuminants, articles of leather and iron, writing paper and a small quantity of haberdashery and articles of fashion. From Great Britain, Siberia receives chiefly cotton and woollen yarn and fabrics, iron, tin-plate et cetera. From Belgium, glass and yarn, are imported; from France, articles of fashion, preserves, wine et cetera.

The United States of America carry on a pretty brisk trade with Siberia through San Francisco, furnishing that country with flour and other articles of food, machinery and agricultural implements, leather goods and guns.

Germany, thanks to the activity of many German firms in Nikolaevsk and Vladivostok, has a predominating influence in the import trade of Siberia. It furnishes the most various goods, although of a very inferior quality, such as furniture, sugar, wine, kitchen utensils, cottons and woollens.

Korea sends to Siberia the produce of its agriculture and cattle rearing, grain, vegetables and cattle. Japan imports mainly wheat, rice, salt, fruits, and to a very limited



extent, articles of luxury. China carries on a large trade with Siberia in tea; the importation of other goods takes place on a small scale bearing a more or less casual character.

The chief articles of Siberian export through the Pacific ports are the produce of the whale and morse industries, furs, sea cabbage and fish. The remaining articles, namely timber, coal from Saghalin, trepang or sea slugs and ginseng, have as yet hardly any industrial importance.

Foreign goods enter Eastern Siberia mainly through Vladivostok, Nikolaevsk on the Amour, Blagoveschensk and Ayan in the Yakutsk territory. By not one of these four routes can duty free goods penetrate into Western Siberia while avoiding the Irkutsk Customshouse. Merchandise from Nikolaevsk proceeds to Sretensk almost 3,000 versts by the Amour only from May to September; in winter about four months this route is still by the Amour over ice, while in the remaining spring and autumn seasons of the year Nikolaevsk is quite cut off from the country, with which accordingly all relations for the time cease. Other route than the Amour there is none. Goods from Sretensk inevitably take the direction of the Lake Baikal where are situated customshouse posts. From Vladivostok goods go by sea and land. In the first case, they are forwarded to the ports of the Sea of Okhotsk, to Kamchatka, the Island of Saghalin, the harbours of Possiet and St. Olga, De Castri bay and others. In the second, the goods go to China, Korea, Khabarovka and various settlements along the Ussuri and again fall into the basin of the Amour. As for the route through Ayan, on account of the entire absence of population in this locality, the importation of foreign goods through the territory of Yakutsk for a long time to come will be unable to assume any appreciable dimensions.

The subjection of articles paying excise to a customs tariff has not so much a fiscal character as the object of regulating the relations of importation of foreign and home productions.

The imports of foreign goods paying duty into the Littoral territory in 1891 were expressed by the figures, 8,000 pounds, valued at 117,689 roubles, the articles being as in the following table.

| Goods imported:                                  | 1890. | 1891.          |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Tohacco in the form of cigars and cigarettes . . | —     | 15 pounds      |
| Raw and refined sugar . . . . .                  | 587   | 61 »           |
| Confectionery, jams, syrups . . . . .            | —     | 20 »           |
| Arrack, rum, grain spirit . . . . .              | 60    | 69 »           |
| Arrack, rum, French brandy . . . . .             | 2,506 | 2,529 bottles. |
| Wines made from grapes and berries . . . . .     | 972   | 1,522 pounds.  |
| » » » » » still . . . . .                        | 1,804 | 2,298 bottles. |
| » » » » » effervescing . . . . .                 | 4,097 | 5,049 »        |
| Mead, porter, beer, cider . . . . .              | 614   | 979 pounds.    |
| » » » » » . . . . .                              | 8,599 | 24,296 bottles |
| Liquid products of the distillation of naphtha . | 1,416 | 104 pounds     |
| Spirit, turpentine and oil polishes . . . . .    | —     | 5 »            |
| Matches . . . . .                                | 1,182 | 2,370 »        |

Only the goods named paying duty are capable of a more or less accurate estimation. As for other goods, they are accounted for only in Vladivostok and Nikolaevsk; in the other ports of the Littoral they escape notice, so that the import returns into this territory are restricted to dutiable goods.

Of the merchandise imported to Vladivostok, about 25 per cent are cottons and woollens; 15 per cent, grain and flour, and 10 per cent, other provisions. Next in order follow, articles made of metal, sugar, spirit, metals, et cetera. In the supply of these goods, Germany plays the first part, providing about 30 per cent of the whole imports. From European Russia come 25 per cent; from England, 13 per cent; from China 12, Japan 13, America 5 per cent, and so on. After the imposition of duty upon certain foreign goods, Russian productions began to be imported in greater quantities, although foreign production still predominate, as appears from the trade returns of Vladivostok for the three years given below.

| Year. | Goods imported, in roubles. |           |           |
|-------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|
|       | Total.                      | Russian.  | Foreign.  |
| 1887  | 5,741,467                   | 2,016,227 | 3,725,240 |
| 1888  | 5,884,508                   | 2,120,987 | 3,763,521 |
| 1889  | 5,709,544                   | 2,384,722 | 3,324,822 |

The distribution of the imported goods among the traders according to their nationality takes the following form.

| 1889.                   | Russian subjects. | Foreign subjects, European and American. | Japanese. | Chinese.  | Coreans. |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Russian goods . . . . . | 1,284,386         | 1,083,610                                | 4,995     | 8,731     | —        |
| Foreign . . . . .       | 231,765           | 1,660,196                                | 182,997   | 1,248,997 | 1,310    |
| Total . .               | 1,516,151         | 2,743,806                                | 187,992   | 1,257,728 | 1,310    |

The above table shows that the trade in Vladivostok is mainly concentrated in the hands of foreigners, namely 73 per cent; the Japanese and Chinese trade chiefly in the productions of their respective countries.

The export from Vladivostok is on the whole small, the principal articles being the products of the whale and morse industries, to the amount of one and a half million roubles, and various furs valued at one million roubles. Next follows sea cabbage, of which 250,000 roubles worth is forwarded to various destinations every year; p a n t a, 35,000 roubles; timber, 30,000 roubles; trepang, 15,000 roubles; and other goods to the value of 250,000 roubles. Thus the total export of Vladivostok may be estimated at three million roubles. Vladivostok, forming the terminus of the Siberian Railway, with the latter's completion, will undoubtedly

occupy an extremely important position in a commercial sense. Already during the last decade a considerable increase has been observed in the annual arrivals of shipping, while the quantity of freights has grown by 200 per cent. Simultaneously with the construction of the line a commercial port will be built there, with whose completion there will be a brisker movement in the shipping.

The trade of Nikolaevsk bears a somewhat different character; from this point for fully 3,000 versts there is a magnificent water way into the interior of the country, thanks to which Nikolaevsk has greater reason to be considered a point of transit than Vladivostok. Of the total imports of Nikolaevsk 35 per cent consist of tea, 11 per cent sugar, 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> per cent various machinery and locomotives, 9 per cent manufactured goods and 8 groceries. The population of Nikolaevsk being inconsiderable, the whole mass of goods is not consumed on the spot but forwarded thence up the Amour.

In supplement to the data on the importation of goods into Nikolaevsk and Vladivostok, may be quoted further the returns on the number of ships that visited these two ports of the Eastern Ocean.

| V l a d i v o s t o k . |           |    |    | N i k o l a e v s k .  |      |           |    |    |    |
|-------------------------|-----------|----|----|------------------------|------|-----------|----|----|----|
| Steam. Sailing. Total.  |           |    |    | Steam. Sailing. Total. |      |           |    |    |    |
| 1873                    | Russian . | 3  | 7  | 10                     | 1877 | Russian . | 4  | 3  | 7  |
|                         | Foreign . | 1  | 18 | 19                     |      | Foreign . | 3  | 12 | 15 |
| 1877                    | Russian . | 5  | 2  | 7                      | 1880 | Russian . | 5  | 1  | 6  |
|                         | Foreign . | 11 | 19 | 30                     |      | Foreign . | 7  | 7  | 14 |
| 1880                    | Russian . | 17 | —  | 17                     | 1884 | Russian . | 6  | 2  | 8  |
|                         | Foreign . | 25 | 29 | 54                     |      | Foreign . | 11 | 4  | 15 |
| 1884                    | Russian . | 26 | 1  | 27                     |      |           |    |    |    |
|                         | Foreign   | 31 | 15 | 46                     |      |           |    |    |    |

The data on the arrival and departure of vessels in the said ports in 1891 appear in the following table.

|                     | A r r i v a l s . |           |          |           |          |           | D e p a r t u r e s . |           |          |           |          |           |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
|                     | Total.            |           | Sailing. |           | Steam.   |           | Total.                |           | Sailing. |           | Steam.   |           |
|                     | Vessels.          | Ton-nage. | Vessels. | Ton-nage. | Vessels. | Ton-nage. | Vessels.              | Ton-nage. | Vessels. | Ton-nage. | Vessels. | Ton-nage. |
| Vladivostok . . . . | 111               | 48,569    | 9        | 658       | 102      | 47,911    | 108                   | 47,612    | 7        | 555       | 101      | 47,057    |
| Nikolaevsk . . . .  | 33                | 9,347     | 6        | 541       | 27       | 8,806     | 33                    | 9,347     | 6        | 541       | 27       | 8,806     |
|                     | 144               | 57,916    | 15       | 1,199     | 129      | 56,717    | 141                   | 56,959    | 13       | 1,096     | 128      | 55,863    |

Thus, from the data quoted it appears that the number of ships arriving at the two chief ports of the Siberian shore of the Eastern Ocean is increasing every year, and there can be no doubt but that with the improvement of the navigation on the Amour and the opening of the Ussuri branch of the Great Siberian Line this growth will go still faster.

Passing to the review of the foreign trade of Siberia across the land frontier with China, Mongolia and Mantchuria, it must be observed that the trade in this direction, although it has been carried on from the earliest times but in consequence of the absence of roads alike within the limits of Siberia and in the conterminous states, has for a long time kept within the same bounds, and with the increase of trade in the navigations of the Amour basin and in the Great Ocean the land trade is apparently diminishing. The most important route in this direction is the natural road connecting the industrial centres of the Celestial Empire through Urga and Maimachin with Kiakhta and Irkutsk, and consequently with the great Siberian tract. Other less important roads, two in number, connect Western China with the territory of Semipalatinsk. Along these principal ways the export of goods from Siberia does not exceed two to three million roubles a year. The import, on the other hand, reaches fourteen to fifteen millions. But if from the latter figure be excluded the value of the tea imported through Kiakhta into European Russia, as this article to a considerable extent is merely in transit as far as Siberia is concerned, the total value of the imported goods will be found to correspond to that of the exports. The chief subject of export is the produce of cattle rearing, and that of import, is tea.

The table below gives the total values of imports and exports, while it must be borne in mind that the Semipalatinsk Customs district does not exactly correspond with the boundaries of the territory of the same name, including as it does part of the Turkestan country. In consequence of this the corresponding figures will differ somewhat from the fact.

| 1891.<br>E x p o r t e d.                        | Semipalatinsk<br>Customs di-<br>strict (with<br>China. | Trade with<br>Urankhai. | Irkutsk Cus-<br>tomhouse<br>through Ki-<br>akhta (with<br>China). | Littoral<br>territory <sup>3</sup> . | Total.     |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Provisions . . . . .                             | 73,063                                                 | 5,688                   | 8,146                                                             | —                                    | 86,897     |
| Raw and half-manufactured<br>materials . . . . . | 190,091                                                | 34,439                  | 682,473                                                           | —                                    | 907,003    |
| Animals . . . . .                                | 109,948                                                | —                       | 6,926                                                             | —                                    | 116,874    |
| Manufactured goods . . . .                       | 1,119,440                                              | 58,044                  | 850,932                                                           | —                                    | 2,028,416  |
| Total . .                                        | 2,168,963 <sup>1</sup>                                 | 98,171                  | 1,548,477                                                         | —                                    | 3,815,611  |
| Imported (examined).                             |                                                        |                         |                                                                   |                                      |            |
| Provisions <sup>4</sup> . . . . .                | 50,317                                                 | 9,813                   | 11,817,795                                                        | 70,594                               | 11,948,519 |
| Raw and half-manufactured<br>materials . . . . . | 373,848                                                | 13,974                  | 169,821                                                           | 880                                  | 558,523    |
| Animals . . . . .                                | 162,457                                                | 77,301                  | —                                                                 | —                                    | 239,758    |
| Manufactured goods . . . .                       | 111,701                                                | 170                     | 589,166                                                           | 46,215                               | 748,252    |
| Total . .                                        | 762,446 <sup>2</sup>                                   | 101,258                 | 12,576,782                                                        | 117,689                              | 13,558,175 |

1. Including 676,421 roubles worth of goods, not accounted for in detail. 2. Including 64,123 roubles worth of goods not accounted for in detail. 3. Per Vladivostok and Nikolaevsk, in the import only dutiable goods being shown. 4. Included tea.

Almost all this barter trade takes place between Siberia and China, while in respect to export the first place is occupied by Semipalatinsk through which about 60 per cent of all the goods exported pass. The imports on the other hand took place mainly through Irkutsk and Kiakhta. The export of Russian goods through Kiakhta during the last six years appears from the following table:

| Goods exported.                               | 1886.          | 1887.     | 1888.     | 1889.     | 1890.     | 1891.     |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                                               | R o u b l e s. |           |           |           |           |           |
| Provisions . . . . .                          | 83,030         | 27,623    | 7,033     | 2,434     | 5,532     | 8,146     |
| Raw and half-manufactured materials . . . . . | 794,400        | 999,094   | 926,119   | 688,361   | 601,667   | 682,473   |
| Animals . . . . .                             | 5,429          | 11,874    | 10,392    | 11,502    | 9,800     | 6,926     |
| Manufactured goods . . . . .                  | 732,315        | 1,416,181 | 1,560,023 | 485,515   | 536,458   | 850,932   |
| Total . . . . .                               | 1,615,174      | 2,454,772 | 2,503,567 | 1,187,812 | 1,153,457 | 1,548,477 |

The value of the exports under the first article, foodstuffs, is extremely small, and is composed mainly of that of grain whose export is subject to great fluctuation.

The second article, more important, is almost entirely formed of the value of various skins and hides, as appears from the data given below for the same years.

|                                               | 1886.          | 1887.   | 1888.   | 1889.   | 1890.   | 1891.   |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|                                               | R o u b l e s. |         |         |         |         |         |
| Skins, sheep and goats . . . . .              | 65,959         | 33,183  | 7,200   | —       | —       | —       |
| » wolves, foxes and lynx . . . . .            | 205,671        | 245,032 | 300,961 | 264,012 | 141,234 | 112,058 |
| » otters, beaver, and bear . . . . .          | 8,603          | —       | 19,319  | 40,900  | 22,536  | 22,590  |
| » various . . . . .                           | 177,205        | 159,743 | 81,714  | 75,159  | 64,965  | 130,774 |
| Russia leather . . . . .                      | 199,921        | 303,597 | 314,278 | 165,290 | 194,397 | 261,275 |
| Tanned hides, except Russia leather . . . . . | 51,954         | 65,346  | 56,173  | 18,305  | 26,170  | 13,020  |
| Horns and hoofs . . . . .                     | 51,407         | 150,089 | 126,382 | 102,852 | 138,370 | 139,978 |

As for the export of manufactured goods, this article is almost entirely confined to the export of cloth, linen and cotton fabrics, exported during the period under consideration as follows.

| Goods exported.                | 1886.          | 1887.   | 1888.   | 1889.   | 1890.   | 1891.   |
|--------------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|                                | R o u b l e s. |         |         |         |         |         |
| Cloth . . . . .                | 298,404        | 695,832 | 637,590 | 85,674  | 118,587 | 158,289 |
| Linen and hemp goods . . . . . | —              | 62,114  | 56,914  | —       | 31,679  | 16,384  |
| Cotton goods . . . . .         | 370,681        | 550,929 | 772,788 | 512,643 | 540,197 | 897,951 |

The imports to Russia from China through the Irkutsk Customhouse, corresponding to Kiakhtha, consist to the extent almost of 98 per cent of tea. The following gives a general view of the imports across this frontier for the same years.

| I m p o r t s :                          | 1886.           | 1887.      | 1888.      | 1889.      | 1890.      | 1891.       |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
|                                          | R o u b l e s . |            |            |            |            |             |
| Provisions . . . .                       | 29,948,230      | 30,034,486 | 17,761,209 | 16,693,746 | 14,213,274 | 11,817,896  |
| Raw and half-manu-<br>factured materials | 6,941           | 18,838     | 46,646     | 54,364     | 41,337     | 169,975     |
| Manufactured goods                       | 98,176          | 52,816     | 93,757     | 113,268    | 266,325    | 594,464     |
| Total . .                                | 30,053,347      | 30,106,140 | 17,901,612 | 16,861,378 | 14,520,936 | 12,582,335* |

On examining the totals of this table for the last six years, a diminution of the imports from thirty millions to twelve million roubles will be noticed, which is caused not only by the diversion of tea cargoes to the sea route, as will be explained later in detail, but mainly by a change in the system of valuation of tea adopted recently, namely instead of the value of tea in retail trade, 60 roubles a pound, the price of tea at the frontier is taken before the payment of duty, about 20 roubles per pound. In fact this diminution is still more considerable as the sum shown includes goods not only received by land through Maimachin-Kiakhta but also by the Amour. It is true that by the latter route comparatively little is received, but in the gross these imports prove to be an appreciable quantity. Thus for example, the value of foodstuffs passing through the Irkutsk Customs in 1891 is composed as follows.

| T e a s .         | Pouds.  | Roubles.   |
|-------------------|---------|------------|
| Bohea tea . . . . | 260,728 | 5,766,323  |
| Brick » (kirpich) | 593,806 | 5,571,841  |
| Cake » (plitka) . | 32,610  | 450,321    |
| Total . . .       | 887,144 | 11,788,485 |

Of the quantity of tea shown, there were brought by the Amour 234 pounds of Bohea tea or less than  $\frac{1}{10}$  per cent; 21,516 pounds of brick tea, or about 4 per cent. Thus through Irkutsk besides tea there passes about one million roubles worth of other foodstuffs.

Speaking of the foreign trade of Siberia it is impossible not to refer to one more article, namely timber, which in the near future must become an important item of Russian export. As a matter of fact, with the vastness of the forest plantations of the Far East, and the absence of any attempt at using them for industrial purposes, these resources till now are lost, bringing the country no advantage. And yet the immense country at the very doors

\* Of which to the value of 5,553 roubles were received by post.

with its four hundred million population suffers from a deficiency of timber, which it might obtain with the greatest advantage for itself from Siberia.

In the interior provinces of China, almost entirely bereft of forest vegetation, timber is sold by weight and extremely dear, seeing that it has to be supplied from very remote places, not seldom a thousand versts away, on the backs of camels. It is true that timber might be furnished to China from Mantchuria, the northern portion of which is yet covered with virgin forest, but it has been preserved there in such an inaccessible situation, that the export and carriage to the chief markets of consumption will be very expensive. On some of the Japanese islands there is also still forest, but in Japan itself there always exists an unfailling demand for that article. Under such circumstances advantage should be taken of the forest wealth of the Amour and Littoral territories, and yet, although since 1863 there have been not a few attempts of the kind, the enterprise has not been attended with success. The timber was exported in the green state, simply hewn without any shaping, in consequence of which its transport came very expensive. On the other hand the same article was received by China from California in a perfectly dry and seasoned condition, sawn and cut up for various purposes. Thanks to such foresight on the part of the American traders, they have a predominating influence in the whole timber trade of China.

In 1863 the first attempt was made to facilitate and regulate the export of timber from the Littoral territory, but it ended in failure. In consequence of the placing of a duty upon the goods destined for export the trade was unable to take root.

Passing to the review of the participation of the separate territories of Siberia in the foreign trade, it may be noted that the most important part in this respect, as far as imports are concerned, falls to the Transbaikal territory, thanks to its direct relations with China via Irkutsk and Kiakhta. Besides the last point the foreign trade of the Transbaikal territory is carried on further via the following centres: Tsurukhaitui, Abagaitui, Tsagan-Olui, and the station of Verkhneulkhunsk, through which in 1889 there were exported into Mongolia animals, animal produce, manufactured goods et cetera, to the amount of 112,849 roubles, while in 1890 the export fell to 69,851 roubles. Through the same centres there were imported from Mongolia various animal produce, animals and tea, in 1889 to the amount of 93,403 roubles, and in 1890 to that of 90,112 roubles.

The Siberian ports of the Arctic Ocean in reference to the importation of foreign goods are on the whole brought under the Customs tariff for the European frontier. But in view of the special peculiar local circumstances not unfrequently duty free importation of foreign goods is authorized by a special Imperial order. And yet the northern shores of Siberia are rarely visited by foreigners. The most important place of importation is the mouth of the Yenisei, whither in 1890 came the steamers of the Anglo-Siberian Company. These steamers were loaded with 24,108 roubles worth of provisions, 130,076 roubles worth of raw and half-manufactured materials, and 214,000 roubles worth of manufactured goods. The flotilla ascended the Yenisei, and their freights reached the towns of Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk and Tomsk. Although these goods were freed from Customs duties, and the same privilege was even extended to the navigation season of 1894 inclusive, neither in 1891 nor in 1892 was there any importation by this route. The English steamers on their return cruise took on board grain and meat.

The Commander Islands forming part of Siberia from an administrative point of view do not present great commercial interest. The exports thence are confined to skins, of which, in 1891, 319,000 roubles worth were despatched, in 1892, 365,000 roubles worth in gold. The imports on the other hand do not exceed 50,000 roubles worth, more than half of the goods coming from America. The figures given here for the value of the skins are calculated only on the Crown tax accruing from them.

The tea trade: From the sketch just presented of the foreign trade of Siberia, it appears that of all the foreign goods imported by land into Siberia or passing through in transit, tea deserves the greatest attention, forming as it does by its value fully 98 per cent of all the imports. And although, as will appear further on, the importation of tea into the Empire via Siberia is declining with every year, yet by its value this article continues even now to occupy the first place in consequence of which it is not out of place to examine somewhat more in detail the routes by which tea travels from China through Siberia, and to elucidate the causes of the decline in its transport through Siberia.

The tea trade with China has existed in Russia fully two centuries. In 1802 only 45,000 pouds were imported of Bohea and brick tea. In 1820 the amount was about 100,000 pouds. In the middle of the present century this figure was trebled, and from the end of the seventies the trade grew particularly fast, thanks to the direct communication established by the Volunteer Fleet between Odessa and the Siberian ports of the Pacific Ocean.

In the last decade however a certain steadiness has been observable, the figure of the imports has fluctuated about two million pouds a year, the direction of importation only changing, that is, overland or by sea.

| Year. | Total, pouds. | European frontier. | Irkutks Customs. |
|-------|---------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1887  | 2,021,095     | 607,320            | 1,429,914        |
| 1888  | 1,921,472     | 695,367            | 1,210,769        |
| 1889  | 1,914,565     | 702,001            | 1,188,971        |
| 1890  | 1,916,985     | 834,720            | 1,001,940        |
| 1891  | 1,964,790     | 743,810            | 1,109,698        |
| 1892  | 2,142,107     | 798,980            | 1,217,046        |

As tea in some cases is imported free of duty it follows that the consumption is somewhat greater than above stated. The data on the importation from 1877 to 1891 inclusive show that the imports across the European frontier are increasing, although unevenly. In the quinquennial period 1877 to 1881, 748,500 pouds were imported; in 1882 to 1886, 885,600 pouds, and in 1887 to 1891, 782,900 pouds. Brick tea was imported in the first five years to the extent of 843,800 pouds, in the second five years to that of 972,100 pouds, and in the third, to that of 1,171,200 pouds. The total quantity of imports changed in the following manner: in the first period, 1,593,000 poud, in the second, 1,890,000 pouds, and in the third, 1,982,000 pouds.



In explanation of the considerable importation noticeable via the Irkutsk Customhouse in 1887, it may be observed that this year was exceptional, a certain firm beginning to operate unsuccessfully with brick tea. It imported an enormous quantity of this article, which naturally did not at once find a buyer and which for three years produced a pressure upon the normal trade in brick tea. A more just idea of the course of the tea trade through the Irkutsk Customhouse may be formed by the comparison of the following figures upon this question. They show the quantities of tea cleared by the Irkutsk Customhouse during the period under consideration.

| Years. | Bohea.                        | Brick. | Cake. | Total. |
|--------|-------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|
|        | T h o u s a n d p o u n d s . |        |       |        |
| 1887   | 472                           | 927    | —     | 1,429  |
| 1888   | 473                           | 738    | —     | 1,211  |
| 1889   | 416                           | 763    | 10    | 1,190  |
| 1890   | 303                           | 667    | 32    | 1,002  |
| 1891   | 302                           | 775    | 33    | 1,110  |
| 1892   | 379                           | 806    | 32    | 1,217  |

Thus the large transport of brick tea in 1887 produced a depression until 1890, from which time the trade in brick tea assumes a more normal character, and the importation of this article steadily increases.

From the figures quoted it is clear that tea is imported into Russia mainly, to the extent of one-half of the total quantity, overland, or through Siberia and the Russian Central Asiatic possessions. The cause of such preference of the land route, although comparatively more expensive than the sea route, will be explained further on.

The main mass of tea is the Bohea which is brought to every part of the Empire and is the more valuable article. Brick tea is consumed only by the Siberian, Kirghiz and Calmuck natives of Eastern Russia, in consequence of which this sort of tea is brought into Russia exclusively across the Asiatic frontiers and knows not the sea route. During the last six years there was imported into Russia and cleared through the Customs brick tea to the following amounts.

|      |                |      |                |
|------|----------------|------|----------------|
| 1886 | 768,415 pouds. | 1889 | 762,807 pouds. |
| 1887 | 957,542 >      | 1890 | 668,659 >      |
| 1888 | 737,834 >      | 1891 | 777,427 >      |

Brick tea is imported almost exclusively via Kiakhta and the Irkutsk Customhouse, very little being transported through the Russian Central-Asiatic possessions, in some years the quantity scarcely reaching 1,000 pouds.

However not the distribution alone of the consumers of brick tea influences the direction taken by its transport; the latter is the result in a much greater degree of the tariff estab-

lished for this sort of tea in the different customhouses. According to the customs dues now in operation, the duty on brick tea is levied at the European frontier at the rate of 21 roubles gold per poud, that is, at the same rate as from Bohea, while the same tea passing through the Irkutsk Customhouse pays only 2. 50 roubles. Thus it is evident that to import it into Odessa and thence forward it to Eastern Russia does not present any advantages.

Brick tea, to resume, is imported annually to the amount of about 750,000 pouds. Excluding this quantity from the total importation, it will appear that the most expensive or Bohea tea is despatched principally by sea, there being a strong tendency to conveyance by sea, evident at a glance from the following comparison as regards the importation of Bohea tea, paying duty.

| Years. | Total.    | Across European frontier. | Via Irkutsk. | Percentage of importation via Irkutsk. |
|--------|-----------|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1887   | 1,065,334 | 607,320                   | 458,014      | 43.0                                   |
| 1888   | 1,168,289 | 695,367                   | 472,922      | 40.5                                   |
| 1889   | 1,117,937 | 702,091                   | 415,846      | 37.1                                   |
| 1890   | 1,137,865 | 834,720                   | 303,145      | 26.6                                   |
| 1891   | 1,046,305 | 743,810                   | 302,495      | 28.8                                   |
| 1892   | 1,041,623 | 665,070                   | 376,553      | 36.0                                   |

The quantity of Bohea tea imported has remained during the last five years almost without change, the transport in the beginning of the period being divided almost equally between the sea and overland carriage, while in the subsequent years the traffic across the Asiatic frontiers declines, in 1891 only 29 per cent passing in this direction. Judging from this, it might be thought that the sea carriage is so much cheaper than that by overland that the privileged tariff now existing in respect to the importation of Bohea tea through the Irkutsk Customhouse, namely 13 roubles gold per poud instead of 21 by the European Customs, is insufficient. But as a matter of fact this is caused by the steadiness of the freights by the sea carriage, while the cost of the overland carriage is subject to considerable fluctuations and depends on many circumstances. To clear up this side of the question and ascertain the significance of tea freights for the future Siberian Railway, it is necessary to indicate of what elements is composed the cost of carriage of tea overland and by sea.

Bohea tea is imported into Russia mainly from Han-Kow, whence it is despatched by sea through Thian-Tsin to Peking, and thence to Kalgan, Urga and Kiakhta to Irkutsk. Besides this, a small portion of tea is forwarded to the Irkutsk Customhouse by another route, namely by water. This route is from Han-Kow by sea to Nikolaevsk, then by the Amour to Sretensk, and thence overland. By this last route the carriage to Irkutsk costs two roubles cheaper than through Kiakhta. But the following circumstances are in the way of the successful development of the traffic in this direction. Nikolaevsk is accessible to steamers only during four to five months of the year, from June to October, and even so only for light

draught vessels drawing less than fourteen feet of water. Next come the inconveniences of the navigation in the stormy Tartar straits and in the mouth of the firth of the Amour. Finally there is the roadlessness of Transbaikalia.

The carriage per pound of tea from Han-Kow through Irkutsk to Nizhni-Novgorod, the chief centre of the trade in the tea imported by this route, costs about 18 to 20 roubles.

|                                                                                        |       |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Carriage from Han-Kow via Thian-Tsin, Pekin and Urga to Kiakhta                        | 7. 28 | roubles |
| Expenditure at Kiakhta and carriage to Irkutsk. . . . .                                | 3. 00 | »       |
| From Irkutsk to Nizhni. . . . .                                                        | 6. 00 | »       |
| Insurance from Thiau-Tsin to Nizhni (2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> per cent) . . . . . | 0. 90 | »       |
| Percentage on capital invested . . . . .                                               | 1. 43 | »       |

T o t a l . 18. 61 roubles

The goods sometimes are a year on the road; they require extremely careful packing, the sewing of the tea boxes into leather cases, and watchful supervision in transit; all these circumstances make the tea traders prefer the sea route, even although the freight should somewhat exceed the difference in the duties.

The cost of the conveyance of tea via Nikolaevsk, Sretensk, Irkutsk and Nizhni, is composed of the following elements: from Han-Kow to Nikolaevsk with packing, insurance, commissions and other expenses, 2.65 roubles; from Nikolaevsk to Sretensk, including transshipment and various general expenses, 2.30 roubles; from Sretensk by road to Irkutsk, 5.55 roubles, thence to Nizhni 6 roubles; the total, 16.50 roubles.

The sea route is considerably cheaper, from Han-Kow to Odessa, including packing, insurance, freight, commissions, customs duties in Odessa, insurance and carriage further by rail to Nizhni, amounts in all to about 6 roubles. Accordingly, a pound of tea in Nizhni brought thither from Han-Kow via Odessa costs 12.60 roubles cheaper than that imported via Kiakhta, and this difference as a matter of fact almost corresponds to the customs difference of 8 roubles gold.

The customary route, along which from old times tea has passed in transit through Siberia into European Russia, begins at Kiakhta or more exactly at Irkutsk and coincides with the great Siberian tract, which runs from Irkutsk through Tomsk to Tiumen. However the comparative dearness of this route not seldom made the tea traders forward their precious freight by more dangerous roads in the hope of a small reduction in the cost of carriage. Frequently the tea caravans were arrested en route in consequence of the early freezing of the Ket, or Chulym or were damaged on the Angara and Yenisei. But notwithstanding all this they even not seldom avoid the great Siberian tract, passing through Bisk by the Chuisk road or from Kalgan to Uliasutai to the upper waters of the Yenisei and thence are floated down on rafts to Minousinsk. Even when following the great Siberian tract the conveyance of tea with the same view to economy has somewhat changed its character. Formerly tea took this route entirely overland, but now a portion of it from Irkutsk is conveyed by water on the Angara to Yeniseisk, is thence carried in carts to Makovsk on the river Ket, Meletsk or Berliuz on the Chulym, and then by water to Tiumen.

Hence, or more often from the terminus of the Ural Railway, Tura, the tea is mainly transmitted to Perm. In 1891 the station Tura despatched 492,261 pounds of tea; among which, 480,941 to Perm, 7,532 to Ekaterinburg, et cetera. The station of Tiumen transmitted a total of 165,926 pounds, including 117,423 to Perm, 42,527 to Ekaterinburg, et cetera. Nizhni Tagil in the same year despatched 46,798 pounds, of which 46,273 were to Perm. The forwarding just mentioned of a considerable quantity of tea to Ekaterinburg may be explained, of course, not by local consumption but by the fact that part of the tea from Ekaterinburg is also transmitted to Perm, namely 5,967 pounds, while part is distributed among the other stations of the Ural Railway, 6,598 pounds, and a still larger quantity is forwarded to Moscow by the Samara Zlatoust railway, 19,709 pounds. From Perm the tea is sent by the Kama, and then by the Volga, in the main to Nizhni, which in 1891 despatched 153,032 pounds of this merchandise by rail; the greater part of which was naturally sent to Moscow.

Moscow is the most important centre of the Russian tea-trade, the tea being brought there and then distributed thence throughout the Russian Empire. The tea which passes through Siberia and the Russian dominions in Central Asia is conveyed to Moscow by four routes; the first two have already been mentioned, namely, the Uralsk and Samaro-Zlatoust railways, and also by the Orenburg and Transcaucasian railways. The tea which comes by sea over the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans reaches Moscow principally through Odessa and Graevo, the transit from London through Königsberg, and partly through the Baltic ports. The total amount conveyed to Moscow in 1890 by all these routes was 1,109,700 pounds or 54 per cent of the whole import. Out of this quantity 969,662 pounds were despatched thence by rail during the same year and the rest was used for local consumption or distributed by carts in the immediate neighbourhood.

When the Siberian Railway is laid the overland transport will naturally be very much cheaper. It will then also be possible, and indeed when even the Eastern portion of the line is completed, to place Eastern Siberia under the same conditions as the Empire as regards customhouse duties, and to stop the free import of tea and put an end to those misunderstandings which arise from the absence of customhouses within the borders of Eastern Siberia. Until 1888 some parts of Western Siberia and Turkestan were also in this privileged position, partly from political and partly from commercial reasons.

Between 1860 and 1870 during the Dungan insurrection which sprang up in western China, gradually spread and finally completely cut off the Chinese tea plantations from the markets of Central Asia, the Russians conceived the idea of profiting by this circumstance in order to take possession of these markets and thrust out the foreign tea dealers from them, as the importation of Chinese tea into Central Asia by the former route through Kashgar had at that time become impossible and the only available one was through Siberia, from Kiakhta to Irkutsk. Under these conditions the Russian tea trade in Central Asia had only to compete with Indian tea, imported from India through Afghanistan. For this reason the customhouse cordon which stretched from the Caspian Sea from south to north along the Urals and the eastern frontier of the government of Orenburg to the barrier of Zverinogolovsk, from which point it turned directly to the east and passed along the former southern frontier of Western Siberia as far as Semipalatinsk and the post of Boukhtarminsk, was

abolished in 1868; and besides this, a free import of Kiakhta teas into the government of Turkestan was granted with the unconditional prohibition against the import of any kind of tea thence into the Russian Empire, a duty being also levied upon any tea imported into Turkestan from any of the neighbouring Khanates. On the same grounds, and also in consequence of the impossibility of European merchandise penetrating into Russia by this route and in order to facilitate commercial intercourse with the Khanates of Central Asia, the importation of all kinds of goods from there was allowed free of duty. Experience however, soon proved that the free import of Kiakhta teas into the region of Turkestan did not justify the hopes which had been originally entertained as the inhabitants of Central Asia acquired the habit of using Indian teas and cheap and harmless native substitutes which found a ready sale among the inexacting consumers. The teas of Kiakhta, on account of their comparatively high price were beyond the reach of inhabitants, the majority of which were extremely poor. At the same time it was discovered that a large amount of Kiakhta tea imported duty free into Turkestan, was not consumed in that country but secretly conveyed from there into Russia, thus occasioning considerable loss to the fair-trade. Apart from this, in course of time, the region to which the free import of tea had been granted became changed; it had originally consisted of the provinces of Syr-Darya and Semirechinsk to which the province of Ferghana, the Zaravshansk district and the department of the Amou-Darya were subsequently annexed, and the province of Semirechinsk was incorporated into the domains of the new Governor-General of the steppes.

The economic and political aspects of this border land of Russia also underwent certain essential alterations; Kuldzha which was occupied by the Russian forces in order to terminate the revolt of the Dungans and Taranchins was receded to China and the treaty of St. Petersburg in 1881 accurately determined the frontier between Russia and western China, and also the points for the admission of goods and regulated the interchange of merchandise. The insurrection in western China little by little subsided; the traces of it are beginning to disappear and a regular and busy trade has established itself between Russia and China. Russian manufactured goods have not only penetrated into Kashgar, but have even supplanted the English wares, and Russia has in this way obtained a fairly lucrative distant market. In Kuldzha, in the district of Tarbagataisk and in western Mongolia Russian goods have competed with equal success against those of England. On account of the considerations already mentioned, and also in consequence of the impossibility of establishing a customhouse cordon between Turkestan and the Russian Empire, and also in order to put an end to the abuses in the free tea trade, it was found expedient to cancel the above mentioned privilege in 1888. In order to attain the object in view a customhouse inspection was simultaneously instituted on the frontier between Semirechinsk and China, as China teas might otherwise be imported from Kuldzha into that province free of duty or hindrance.

The high duty on tea renders it profitable to convey it from very distant places so that tea upon which no duty had been levied could easily make its way into the provinces of Semirechinsk and Semipalatinsk, and thence to Tomsk and even penetrate into the interior of European Russia and thus cover a very extensive region.

For this reason in 1890 a customhouse inspection was established on the frontier between Russia and western China within the limits of the government of Tomsk and the provinces of Semirechinsk and Semipalatinsk. This extension of the customhouse line was due to the desire of preventing the diversion of tea freights from the Kiakhta route to a direction less subjected to customhouse supervision. It was also discovered that the most advantageous route for transporting tea was not through Urga and Kiakhta but through Uliassutai and Kobdo. This route is much shorter than that of Kiakhta and at one end of it the goods are delivered at Semipalatinsk and at the other at Biisk, from both of which towns there is regular steamer service to Tumen, the freight by steamer or barge to Tumen being about 25 kopecks. Finally, transporting tea by this route obviates the necessity of the expensive process of sewing up the tea in skins, as the Chinese carry the packets in horsecloths or in blankets, which they take back afterwards, and on the steamers or barges it is not necessary to take precautionary measures for preserving the tea.

This is a brief account of the part played by Siberia in the Russian tea trade; it is a very important, and when the Great Railway Line is opened even as far as Irkutsk, it will assume far greater proportions.



## CHAPTER XIV.

**Water and overland communication.**

The transport of goods between European Russia and Siberia by the Volga and Obi; the Obi-Yenisei canal; navigation in Western Siberia; navigation on the Yenisei and Angara; steam navigation on the Baikal; navigation on the Lena and the Amour basin; steamer communication with the Siberian ports of the Northern and Eastern oceans; the Volunteer Fleet; a cursory view of the overland communications.

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**T**HE wide expanse and sparse population of Siberia combined with that historical destiny which has been described in the commencement of the present work, have prevented its being enriched with regular overland means of communication which could have been accomplished at the expense of a vast amount of labour and capital. Nature has, on the other hand, richly endowed this country with water communication; washed on the north and east by the waters of the Arctic and Pacific oceans, it is at the same time intersected for thousands of versts by large rivers connecting these oceans with western China, and in general with Central Asia. Thanks to these rivers, whose basins cover several million square versts, in summer time it is possible to communicate with far distant regions. This was the route taken by the conquerors of Siberia and the settlers who followed them. The Volga, Kama Chusovaya, Serehrianka, Tagil, Tura, Tohol, Irtish, Obi, and other rivers and comparatively short forest tracts this is the route followed by Ermak and by the traveller of the present day. This is however from the west, but of late years communication has been kept up with Siberia by sea from the north and from the east.

The hydrographic sketch of Siberia already given has shown how abundantly the country is supplied with water, but unfortunately the insufficiency of the coast development on the one hand, and the severe climate of the arctic zone on the other hand, prevent the sea navigation from reaching that degree of development which would be possible under more favourable conditions. This same severity of climate and the prolonged period during which the rivers are in consequence frozen over, considerably hinders navigation on the principal Siberian rivers which fall into the Arctic Ocean. Other circumstances, which will be mentioned hereafter also interfere with the progress of navigation on those rivers which flow into the Pacific.

The most important rivers of Siberia, the Obi, Yenisei and Lena, flow from south to north, and are for the greater part of their course navigable; only one river, the Amour, flows to the east, and, at the junction with the Sungara, turns northwards and falls into the Pacific Ocean.

The great Siberian river, the Obi, rises in Mongolia, carries vast masses of water into the Arctic Ocean and gathers along its extensive course a multitude of large and small rivers which fertilize and animate an expanse of more than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million square versts. With a total length of 5,300 versts it has a most extensive basin on which regular navigation is kept up over an extent of 15,000 versts. There is always a lively transport trade on the Obi system and the rivers composing it have a transit character, as there is but little local exchange of merchandise, all freights being transported from far distant regions. Being almost on the borders of Europe and Asia, the Obi and its tributaries form the cheapest means of communication between two vast continents of the world. Asia only supplies Europe with the raw products of the soil, the animal kingdom, the produce of the fishing and hunting trades which Europe then returns to her in a finished state. Before the opening of the Ural Railway these goods were conveyed in summer principally along the Kama and its tributaries, then carried by road across the Ural chain and then again by water on the rivers of the Obi system. The road is now replaced by the Ural and Samaro-Zlatoust railways, which deliver European goods to the Obi system through the Tura, Mias and other rivers; but the most important route before the opening of the Cheliabinsk section was the Ural line which delivers goods partly at Irbit and partly at Tumen. These goods, both from Irbit and Tumen are conveyed further into Siberia on the rivers Tura and Tobol up to the point where this latter falls into the Irtish. A considerable quantity of goods from the Krestovskiy fair follow the route. Before reaching the mouth of the Tobol, part of the freight separates and goes down the Tavda and southern Sosva to supply the wants of the population of the settlements along these rivers as well as the Sosvinsk works and those of the Bogoslovsk mining district.

From the mouth of the Tobol the European freights are distributed in two directions: about 25 per cent goes towards the source of the Irtish and 75 per cent towards that of the Obi. The goods are conveyed along the Irtish principally to the following populated points: the towns of Tura, Omsk, Pavlodar and Semipalatinsk; those conveyed along the Obi are in a small part destined for the consumption of the strangers and fishmongers on the lower parts of that river, and the sparse population of the towns of Berezov and Obdorsk, whilst by far the greater part is sent up the Obi to supply the government of Tomsk and the whole of Eastern Siberia. The principal points of destination are Surgut, Narym, Barnaoul and Biisk, but the most important is Tomsk. Some of the goods are also shipped up the Chulim as far as the settlement of Berluze and the town of Achinsk.

The Siberian goods pass over the same route but in the contrary direction and here the lower parts of the Tura and Tobol form a most important part of the waterways of Siberia joining all the streams which convey Siberian merchandise to Russia in Europe. In the same way the Irtish and its tributaries are the most important part of the Obi basin and then the middle course of the Obi itself but not that portion of



it which is so abounding in water. The statistics of the quantity and character of the goods conveyed by the Ural Railway may therefore be taken to describe the goods traffic on the Tura and Tobol; Tura, the terminus of the Ural line, situated on the river bearing that name, receives all the European goods sent to Siberia by water and also despatches freight by rail from Siberia to European Russia. The following table gives these statistics from the opening of the Ural Railway:

| Date. | European goods received at Tura station, in pounds. | Date. | Siberian goods, despatched from Tura station, in pounds. |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1886  | 985,000                                             | 1886  | 753,000                                                  |
| 1887  | 1,243,000                                           | 1887  | 3,028,000                                                |
| 1888  | 1,428,000                                           | 1888  | 4,234,000                                                |
| 1889  | 1,504,000                                           | 1889  | 2,746,000                                                |
| 1890  | 1,713,000                                           | 1890  | 3,516,000                                                |
| 1891  | 2,302,000                                           | 1891  | 4,855,000                                                |

These figures show that the goods traffic from Siberia to European Russia is rapidly developing whilst that from European Russia to Siberia makes but very slow progress. This proves that Siberia is capable of producing far more than she requires, and that the opening of the Ural Railway was sufficient to draw goods from far distant places in the province of Semipalatinsk to European Russia. The principal freight which Tura receives by water and forwards by rail is grain; in 1891 the total amount of grain of various denominations transported was 3,930,805 pounds, or 80 per cent of the whole transport; this included 2,195,019 pounds of wheat, 571,778 pounds of rye, 345,555 pounds of oats, 48,365 of barley, 574,980 of rye flour, 145,835 pounds of wheat flour, et cetera; there were 1,151,913 pounds of this delivered at Ostrovskaya station and 1,081,995 at Ekaterinburg. Besides grain, 492,261 pounds of tea were despatched from the same station, of which 480,941 pounds were directed to Perm to be sent further on. Grain and tea therefore amount to more than 90 per cent of the Siberian goods. Siberia principally receives 364,000 pounds of sugar, 340,000 pounds of various naphtha products, 270,000 pounds of manufactured goods, about 100,000 pounds of iron and iron wares, 140,000, of tobacco, 36,000 pounds of candles, or about 63 per cent of the whole amount received.

The goods traffic along this main water way of the Tura and Tobol rivers has only of late years begun to assume a lively aspect. Before the opening of the Ural Railway the yearly transport did not exceed 2·5 million pounds, and it has now risen to 16 million pounds; in 1886 it amounted to 3 millions; in 1888, to 7 million, and in 1890, to 8 million pounds. This quantity of 16 million pounds forms 75 per cent of the whole goods traffic on all the waters of Western Siberia, as the total amount does not exceed 20 million pounds. The river Tura is the most important means of communication between Siberia and European Russia. It becomes navigable from Turinsk, but the briskest traffic is from Tiumen to the mouth of the river, a distance of 169 versts. The Tobol is navigable for about 600 versts, but the only part of it

which is of much importance is from the mouth of the Tura to the junction of the Tobol with the Irtish. The Irtish itself is navigable from its mouth to Semipalatinsk, a length of 2,620 versts; in its long course it intersects the fertile province of Semipalatinsk, the Kirghiz, Ishinsk and Barabinsk steppes, and fertilizes an enormous territory. This river conveys grain freights, salt, cattle and animal products to Tobolsk and Tiumen from even the far distant parts of the province of Semirechinsk. Steam navigation was started here in 1862.

Although the Obi is a very full stream from Samarov it flows through, an almost uninhabited region, so that there is no regular service of steamers down its course. There is however a brisk traffic on the upper part of it as far as Barnaul, a distance of about 2,000 versts, and sometimes as far as Biisk. The Obi is formed by the junction of the Bey and the Katuna, and its principal tributaries are on the right. The most important of these are the Tom which waters the rich district of Kuznetsk and the Chulym which is navigable although with difficulty as far as Achinsk, a distance of 1,000 versts. The river Ket has also a considerable commercial importance as a connecting link between the basins of the Obi and Yenisei, through the Obi-Yenisei canal, now in course of construction. Steamers can go up the Ket as far as the settlement of Makovsk.

The above mentioned Obi-Yenisei canal is to connect the Ket, a tributary of the Obi, with the Kass, a tributary of the Yenisei. The idea of connecting the basins of the Obi and Yenisei originated a hundred years ago when a scheme was presented to the Emperor Paul for joining these system by the Tym, a tributary of the Obi, and the Sym, a tributary of the Yenisei. Schemes were next proposed for joining the Ket with the Kem, a tributary of the Yenisei and the Vakh, a tributary of the Obi, with the Elagona, a tributary of the Yenisei, but none of these projects were realized. Considerably later, in 1875, the new idea of joining the Ket with the Great Kass sprang up. A Siberian merchant, Funtusov, at his own initiative and expense investigated the ground between these two rivers, and finding that the scheme was feasible, drew the attention of the Government to this subject. The engineers who were sent over to study the question found that it was quite possible to carry out the work and it was therefore resolved to commence the undertaking. The river Ozerneya falls into the Ket at a distance of 550 versts from its mouth. The river Lomovataya flows into the Ozerneya and is connected with the river Yazevaya which flows out of the lake Bolshoi. The little Kass rises in the vicinity of this lake and falls into the big Kass which forms part of the Yenisei system. The river Ozerneya forms part of the canal  $14\frac{1}{2}$  versts from its mouth. The canal then follows the Lomovataya for  $47\frac{1}{2}$  versts and the Yazevaya for  $31\frac{3}{4}$  versts up to lake Bolshoi. From this point a canal has been excavated  $7\frac{1}{2}$  versts long and 6 fathoms wide at the bottom, which enters the little Kass and follows it for a distance of 89 versts to the point where the big Kass commences at a distance of 192 versts from the Yenisei. The navigable Angara joins the Yenisei near the mouth of the big Kass and flows from lake Baikal on the shore of which Irkutsk is situated. The Obi-Yenisei canal will therefore open up an enormous water way of 5,000 versts, connecting Tiumen with Irkutsk and intersecting the whole of Western Siberia. This work was commenced at the expense of the Government in 1882 and is being carried on very energetically; a great deal has been done, and there is every hope that the undertaking will shortly be brought to a successful termination. In

connection with this, much dredging has been done in order to deepen and clear the connecting streams, so that the result will most likely be eminently satisfactory.

Thanks to the abundance of water in the rivers of the Obi system, there is a large number of steamers plying on them, belonging to private owners and companies, and in some places, even a regular service is kept up. The success and progress of the Obi steam navigation is due to the Government, which always granted assistance to private initiative whenever it was in the interests of the public.

The first steamer in Western Siberia belonged to Poklevski and made its appearance on the Obi in 1843; in 1854 there were 3; in 1860, 10; in 1870, 20; in 1875, 32; in 1880, 37; in 1885, 57; in 1887, 60; in 1889, 64; in 1890, 65; in 1891, 69; in 1892, 90; and in the present year there are 102 steamers and 200 barges. Most of the steamers do not exceed 100 nominal horse power and at present the fleet of Western Siberia consists of the following boats:

|    |                                       |
|----|---------------------------------------|
|    | 1 steamer of 250 nominal horse power. |
| 1  | » » 180 » » »                         |
| 4  | » » 150 » » »                         |
| 8  | » » 120 » » »                         |
| 9  | » » 100 » » »                         |
| 18 | » » 80 » » »                          |
| 11 | » » 60 » » »                          |
| 15 | » » 40 » » »                          |
|    | 21 small steamers.                    |

The principal traffic, as already stated, is between the sources of the Bey and the Katuna on the one hand, and that of the Irtysh on the other hand, as far as the mouths of the Tura and Tobol, the freights being conveyed the enormous distances of 2 to 3 thousand versts. The question of rates for such long journeys is of great interest. Notwithstanding the great progress made in steam navigation and the competition between shipowners, freights on the Obi basin are very high; for 3,000 versts the charge is 25 kopecks per pound, that is  $\frac{1}{120}$  kopeck per pound-verst, whilst on the Volga for long distances the boats eagerly take  $\frac{1}{600}$  kopeck and even  $\frac{1}{700}$  kopeck per pound-verst. This is due to the insecurity of the navigation in consequence of the great risks in running the steamers without the requisite auxiliary measures. Scanty and incomplete information concerning the opening and freezing of the rivers, insufficient telegraphic communication to give warning of an unexpected ice blockade, the small number of inhabited points along the principal rivers, and other circumstances, are the means of causing frequent disasters.

The measures lately taken by the Government for improving the water system of Western Siberia, which serves as a feeding branch for the Great Siberian Railway, will doubtless have the effect of lowering the rates; and the surplus grain, accumulated in the Tomsk, Semipalatinsk and Semirechinsk districts, will not only find an advantageous outlet in the distant parts of Siberia, but will approach St. Petersburg by water and eventually find its way abroad.

Some of the most important of these measures are: that dredging will be carried on along the bottom of the river Tura between its mouth and Tiumen, along the Tobol from the mouths of the Tura till it falls into the Irtish, along the river Tom from Kuznetsk to its mouth and along the river Chulym from Achinsk to its mouth. On a considerable portion of the Obi system difficult places for navigation will be marked and observations of the water level will be taken which will be telegraphed to the places where the vessels usually resort. A telegraph wire will be laid from Tobolsk to Samarov and from Samarov to Krivoschekov, a distance of 2,245 versts. In order to carry on these operations the necessary dredging and earth removing machinery, 5 steamers and 3 steam long-boats will be amongst other things provided by the Government.

The river Yenisei, which rises in Mongolia, is navigable almost from the frontier to its mouth. For a long time however the rapids interfered with the progress of navigation, but it has lately been found possible to go round them. Steam navigation on the Yenisei really began in 1863 when traffic was opened between its mouth and Yeniseisk. Five years later a Dutch company offered to establish a regular steamboat service on the Angara to Baikal and to clear away the rapids, but the offer was not accepted. In 1888 the number of steamers rose to 4 and the total amount of freight conveyed was 129,000 pouds. In 1890 there were 6 steamers, 30 barges and about 20 large boats plying between Yeniseisk and Karaoul transporting 260,000 pouds of merchandise. Regular steamboat service on the Yenisei is kept up, on the one side, between Yeniseisk and Krasnoyarsk, and on the other, between Krasnoyarsk and Minusinsk. A similar service between Yeniseisk and the mouth of the river could not be established, partly on account of insufficiency of freights, and partly on account of the rapids.

At present, in order to convey building materials for the Great Siberian Railway by sea through the mouth of the Yenisei, the Government has found it expedient to investigate this route, the gulf of Yenisei and the river itself. For this purpose two steamers have been ordered, specially designed for cruising on the Yenisei, and in 1893 an expedition will be fitted out and despatched to the estuary of the river. Both of these steamers were ordered in England at Dumbarton and were to be ready July 1st, this year. One of them has a twin screw, is of 500 horse power and draws 8 feet of water; it is destined for service between the mouths of the Yenisei and the town of Yeniseisk and calculated to carry 93,000 pouds; the other is a paddle steamer with a draught of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet; it is intended to tow barges up to 60,000 pouds weight between Yeniseisk and Krasnoyarsk. In this way the whole journey from the mouths of the Yenisei to Krasnoyarsk can be effected without unloading, by simply changing the barges in tow from one steamer to the other.

From Yeniseisk the navigation takes another direction, along the river Angara which is a tributary of the Yenisei. It flows from lake Baikal through a distance of 1,705 versts and joins the Yenisei at Yeniseisk. For a distance of 600 versts from Irkutsk to the prison of Bratsk, the Angara is quite navigable but the remainder of its course of more than a thousand versts is full of rapids and interferes with regular navigation. However, Sibiryakov thought it worth his while in 1885 to solicit a five-years license from the Government for running steamers on this part of the river, binding himself within the space of two years to organize

a service of tug and cable boats for carrying goods, passengers and mails by at least two steamers. Sibiriyakov's endeavours to institute cable steamers on the Angara may be called unsuccessful; in the middle of 1888 he started a caravan of two steamers and 3 barges with a load of 30,000 pounds of grain up the Angara. By August 15th the caravan had only travelled 400 versts and on account of the shallow water had to stop at 500 versts from its destination, the mouth of the Ilim, and turn back after having sustained considerable damage. Regular steamboat service on the Angara between Irkutsk and Yeniseisk is therefore a thing of the future, but as the Great Siberian Railway will intersect both the Yenisei and the Angara, these two rivers will serve to feed it and deliver goods both from above and below. Further on, at Verkhneoudinsk, the line will intersect the large river Selenga which rises in China and is within a distance of 1,000 versts from the Chinese Yellow river. Here steamers are plying and the railway can not only be supplied with freights coming from lake Baikal by water, but even with goods from the borders of China.

The third large Siberian river, the Lena, occupies a more independent position and is neither connected with the Amour basin, nor with that of the Yenisei. The basin of the Lena does not directly come in contact with the Great Siberian Railway but will in all probability have a considerable influence indirectly in delivering goods from the Yakutsk region. There is at present steam navigation on the Lena, but it is more or less of a casual nature. Vessels from Europe have repeatedly visited the estuary of this river but the trade was of less importance than that done at the mouth of the Yenisei. The Government, being anxious to encourage intercourse between Europe and the Siberian shores of the Arctic Ocean, has several times granted by an Imperial decree a free import of goods through the mouths of the Obi, Yenisei and Lena to various individuals, including foreigners. The final term of this privilege expires next year, in 1894.

The Kiakhta Steamboat Company, founded in 1881 by the local merchants, keeps a regular steamboat service on lake Baikal in accordance with the Government regulations of May 1, 1890, referring to mail-passenger and steam tug service on lake Baikal. These regulations require that the company should employ the two steamboats it possesses for the following work: 1. three journeys a week from the Listvenich settlement to Mysovsk pier, a distance of 80 versts across the lake from west to east and back; 2. five journeys to and fro per season from the Listvenich settlement to the Tourkinsk mineral water springs, the mouth of the Bargouzin, Krougoulin, Sosnovka and the mouth of the Upper Angara, a distance of 700 versts. These latter journeys were fixed in accordance with the local requirements and subject to the approval of the Governor-General of Irkutsk; the service is in general carried on according to a time-table edited by the company, upon agreement with the local authorities, and confirmed by the chief of the district. For keeping up the above mentioned service the company receives the following Government subsidies: 1. for the journeys between Listvenich and Mysovsk, 296 roubles for every double journey there and back; 2. for every cruise from Listvenich to the mouth of the Upper Angara, 2,170 roubles; counting 78 of the first and 5 of the second journeys per season, the total subsidy amounts to 33,938 roubles, and should not exceed this sum. The concession has been granted to the company for a term of 12 years commencing from 1890.

This concludes the description of the navigation on the Siberian waters feeding the Arctic Ocean, as the basin of the fourth Siberian river, the Amour, and the lake Khank which is in connection with it, appertains entirely to the Eastern Ocean.

### **Navigation on the Amour basin.**

The navigation on the Amour basin is a matter of comparatively recent date; as lately as 1840 it was not known whether the rivers of this basin were navigable, and very little was known of the Amour itself and its estuary. In 1844 for the first time an Imperial edict was issued, empowering the Russian-American Company to fit out a vessel at the expense of the Government for exploring the estuary of the Amour. On May 5, 1846, the ship «Constantine», under the command of Gavrilov, entered the Amour, and this was the first vessel that had ever made its appearance on the waters of that river. From that time the exploration of the country went with more rapid strides, and later, thanks to the military expedition of Count Mouraviev, who in 1854 descended the Amour with the Government steamer «Argun», built at the Shilkinsk works, Russian rule in the Amour region obtained a firm foothold. The formal annexation of the extensive basin of the Amour to the Russian dominions later on may be regarded as the commencement of the civil development of that region. In 1855 Vice-Admiral Poutiatin went up the Amour in the steamer «Nadezhda» and in the following year another steamer, the «Shilka» made its appearance. At the end of 1856 an Imperial edict was issued concerning the organization of the Amour province which included Kamchatka, the whole of the shore of the Okhotsk Sea with the region of Udsk and the places occupied by Russia in the low country of the Amour and the Straits of Tartary. In order to keep up regular intercourse between the different points of the new territory the Government acquired two more steamers, the «Amour» and «Lena». Thus in 1857 there were 5 Government steamers plying on the Amour; in 1860 the number was increased to 8, and in 1870 it rose to 12. At the same time private individuals and separate Government institutions also began to provide themselves with steamers; the first private steamboat on the Amour made its appearance in 1859; the telegraph department in 1868 possessed 5 steamers and the Engineering Department 3, so that in 1870 there were altogether 25 steamboats on the Amour.

About this time the idea originated of instituting a regular steamboat time service on the Amour in order to satisfy the increasing wants of trade and in case of necessity for moving troops and carrying Government stores and forage. For this purpose, at the end of the year 1871, a 20-years concession was granted to Benardaki and Co. for keeping up a regular steamboat communication on the rivers of the Amour basin. Benardaki then formed the company for organizing regular steamboat traffic on these rivers. The company took upon itself the obligation of maintaining from 1872 regular mail and passenger traffic on the Amour between Nikolaevsk and Sretensk, a distance of 2,956 versts, also a mail steam tug service from Khabarovka to post № 4 near lake Khanka, a distance of 630 versts, on lake Khanka as far as the post of Kamen-Rybolov, 135 versts, and an occasional steam tug service from Sretensk to Nicolaevsk.

The number of steamers was not to be less than 12, and when the company was started the Government made over to it 9 steamers which belonged to the Naval Department. The passenger and goods freights were fixed by a special tariff and the Government besides guaranteeing a fixed amount of Government freights also agreed to pay a subsidy during the whole stipulated period of 20 years in the shape of a payment of 2 roubles 15 kopecks for every verst of each voyage on the rivers Shilka, Amour, Ussuri and lake Khanka during the first 10 years with a reduction of 5 per cent per annum during the next 10 years. The highest limit of this scale was fixed at 245,000 roubles a year. Without dwelling upon the other details of the agreement between the Government and the Amour Steamboat Company, it may be mentioned that the latter pledged itself to erect engineering workshops at Khabarovka for repairing the Government steamers, and to provide its own boats with the necessary means for executing small repairs.

Thanks to the institution of regular steam navigation on the Amour basin, the intercourse between the various points of Eastern Siberia became so animated that private individuals were able to start their own steamers and barges without Government assistance. Fifteen years after the formation of the Amour Steamship Company, in 1885, there were 44 steamers owned by various individuals and companies cruising on the waters of the Amour basin as seen below:

1. The Amour Steamship Company possessed 17 steamers of 1,107 aggregate horse power, and also 18 iron and 8 wooden barges, carrying altogether 161,000 pouds.
2. The merchant Pakholkov possessed 2 steamers of 120 horse power and 2 barges.
3. The Hamburg merchant Dickman owned 5 steamers of 265 total horse power and 4 barges.
4. The Kiakhta Company owned 2 steamers of 180 total horse power and 3 barges.
5. The mercant Loukine was running 3 steamers of 190 total horse power.
6. The merchant Boutine owned 5 steamers of 205 total horse power and 6 barges carrying altogether 57,000 pouds.
7. The Upper Amour Gold-digging Company had 2 steamers of 160 total horse power.
8. The Telegraph Department was running one steamer of 15 horse power.
9. The Engineering Department owned one steamer of 40 horse power.
10. The Zeisk Company owned 3 steamers with an aggregate of 267 horse power.
11. The Nieman Company owned one steamboat of 12 horse power.
12. The merchant Etkine was running 2 steamers of 80 total horse power.

Of all the above mentioned shipowners only the Amour Steamship Company and the Kiakhta Steamboat Company received assistance from the Government; the former during the 20 years of the original concession received 245,000 roubles mileage and 75,000 roubles guarantee for carrying Government freights, altogether 258,750 roubles; and after the expiration of this concession, in 1891, a temporary agreement was made with the company insuring it a yearly Government subsidy of 183,000 roubles until the present year 1893. The latter company receives a mileage in the same proportion, amounting to 33,938 roubles per annum, for regular steam service on lake Baikal and the passenger and goods freights have been fixed at a rather high tariff. For instance, the charge for conveying tea, furs and manufactured goods between

the settlement of Listvenich and the Boyarsk pier, a distance of 10 versts, is  $\frac{1}{8}$  kopeck per poud-verst; and from Listvenich to the mouth of Angara, a distance of 700 versts, there is a reduction of 40 per cent from this poud-verst charge.

When first started, the Amour Steamboat Company was hardly prepared to execute the obligations it had taken upon itself; not possessing capital, it was obliged to have recourse to foreign loans, and the percentages on the sinking fund of the debt swallowed up a considerable portion of the revenue, so that, notwithstanding repeated assistance from the Government in the shape of loans, the company was unable to keep its steamers in proper repair. In consequence of this, when the contract expired in 1892 there was a question of entrusting the steam service on the Amour basin to other parties. An offer was made by Messrs. Sibiriakov and Shevelev who were willing to undertake the business on more advantageous terms than the Amour Steamboat Company. In making a new contract it was expedient to stipulate that the old steamers should be replaced by new ones. In consequence however of the delay in concluding the contract, the new promotors were unable to change the old steamers at once and therefore the Government allowed the business to remain two years longer in the hands of the Amour Company, especially as they agreed to the same terms as the new contractors. The principal conditions were as follows: the contractors undertake to keep up a regular steam service on the Amour, Ussuri, Shilka river and lake Khanka for the space of 15 years with a Government subsidy in the form of a payment of 1 rouble 50 kopecks per verst for every verst actually made on these waters during the firsts 10 years, with a reduction of 5 per cent per annum for the succeeding 5 years, this mileage not to exceed 183,532 roubles per annum during the first 10 years. Besides this the Government does not bind itself to provide cargoes or to make extra payments for them.

Next year, therefore in 1894, the new steamers of Sibiriakov and Shevelev will make their appearance on the waters of the Amour basin; their contract expires in 1908. At present the Government is examining the request of these contractors to turn the Amour Steamboat enterprise into a joint-stock company with a capital of one million roubles.

The organization of regular and constant steam service between the coast stations of the far distant Russian domains on the shores of the Pacific has always engrossed the attention of the Government as it would provide a convenient and cheap sea route for the local population. In the complete absence of roads in that region, steamboat communication acquires particular importance as being the only means of intercourse between the above mentioned points. The efforts made in this direction would also exercise a beneficial result upon Russian commercial intercourse with Corea, Japan and China and benefit the economical position of the country. Whilst up to 1880 the existing means of transport were not only insufficient to secure regular communication for the inhabitants but did not even suffice for the wants of the administrative establishments for the transport of Government stores and passengers. For these reasons the Government has repeatedly taken measures for facilitating sea communication between the Pacific ports of Siberia on the one hand, and between these ports and the principal ports of Japan and China on the other, but regular communication has been effected only since 1881, when the matter was undertaken by Mr. Shevelev. This gentleman bound himself to keep up a time service between Vladivostok and Nicolaevsk and



between Vladivostok and Han-Kow, touching at Shankhai, Nagasaki, the gulf of St. Olga, the Korsakovsk post, the Imperial harbour, post Doue and the gulf of De Castri; besides freights according to a fixed tariff, the contractor receives from the Government a mileage of 3 roubles during the first 10 years, with 10 per cent reduction per annum, for the next 5 years.

The voyages abroad were instituted in the interests of commerce to maintain intercourse with the countries lying to the south of the Russian dominions. In consequence however of the evident urgent necessity of increasing the communication between the Russian ports, Mr. Shevelev's steamer «Baikal» was in 1886 exclusively employed in cruising about the gulf of Tartary, accomplishing six journeys to Nicolaevsk to the detriment of the foreign trade. Besides this steamer, two other vessels of the Siberian flotilla and one steamer belonging to the Naval Department were employed in carrying goods and passengers through the Straits of Tartary. Some of the above mentioned Pacific ports, such as Done, the Korsakovsk post, and others, are also visited by the vessels of the Volunteer Fleet; nevertheless the means of transport available, about 1885, did not suffice for the increasing wants of the Siberian Pacific region and it was necessary to have recourse to the foreign vessels which brought goods from Western Europe and the United States to the Siberian ports.

It was naturally undesirable that foreign vessels should take part in the coasting trade in Russian waters along the shores of Eastern Siberia, and therefore the question arose of increasing the steamboat service in the Far East. Upon due consideration it was deemed most advisable to allow Mr. Shevelev to institute some supplementary communication between the ports of the Pacific, and a contract was concluded with him for 15 years from September 17, 1888. Mr. Shevelev bound himself to keep up three lines of regular steamers: 1. through the Straits of Tartary between Vladivostok and Nicolaevsk; 2. between Vladivostok and Shankhai; 3. in the gulf of Peter the Great, touching at certain points along the line. The passenger and goods freights were charged in accordance with a fixed tariff, and besides this, in order to encourage the enterprise, the contractor receives from the Government a mileage at the rate of three roubles paper for every mile during the first 10 years with a gradual yearly reduction of 10 per cent per annum for the remaining 5 years. This mileage during the first two years was not to exceed the sum due for a distance of 37,000 miles, and for 50,000 miles for the following years. According to the terms of this contract Shevelev is at present running steamers between the above mentioned ports of the maritime district and also to Han-Kow, Nagasaki and Shankhai.

There is no regular service of steamers to the other ports of the Arctic and Pacific. But even the establishment of a casual steam service between the European ports and the ports of Siberia on the Northern and Eastern Oceans has a most important influence upon the industrial development of the country.

The determination of a northern route from Europe through the White Sea and the Kara Straits with the mouths of the Obi, Yenisei and Lena has been briefly described at the commencement of this article and it now only remains to add some supplementary information on this subject. Thanks to the authority of Count Litke, the academecian Bere and other northern explorers, who did not admit of the possibility of penetrating from Europe into Asia

through the Arctic Ocean, the northern sea route to Siberia was regarded as an unattainable vision, and M. K. Sidorov did great service when, in 1853, he was the first to prove the erroneousness of the opinions of Count Litke and Mr. Bere; unfortunately however he did not succeed in awakening the sympathy of any of the scientific societies. He based his arguments upon the constant intercourse between the inhabitants of the coast from the mouths of the Pechora and Obi, but nevertheless, such a strong conviction prevailed that it was impossible to reach the Kara Sea, that the promise made by Sidorov of a large reward to the first vessel which would enter the Yenisei and bring back a cargo of graphite, was not sufficient to tempt anybody. In 1862 he succeeded in persuading Krusenstern to undertake an expedition to the east, and although it did not terminate successfully, still it convinced those who took part in it that the Kara Sea was almost free of ice. However no more adventures were found after Krusenstern, so Sidorov was obliged himself to take the initiative and determined to fit out a polar expedition at his own expense, but not finding any of his own countrymen desirous of joining him, he went to Sweden where he made the acquaintance of Baron Nordenskjöld. Next a lively correspondence was entered into between them, Nordenskjöld becoming ever more and more interested in Sidorov's ideas about a sea route to Siberia.

In 1869 Sidorov sailed on the steamer «Georgi» from Cronstadt, but near the mouths of the Pechora let slip the favourable time while saving the English steamer «Norfolk». Resolutely propagating his idea, Sidorov applied to the well known geographer Petermann to print in his celebrated *Mittheilungen* an appeal to those desirous of accepting his offer, namely a reward of 2,000 pounds sterling to him who should first make the sea passage from Europe to the estuary of the Yenisei. Thanks to the wide circulation of Petermann's magazine, Sidorov's appeal attracted the attention of the Englishman Wiggins who loaded the steamer «Diana» for this expedition. In 1874, he successfully passed through the Kara Sea and entered the mouths of the Obi and Yenisei, after which he returned to England having practically demonstrated the possibility of a north sea passage to Siberia. In 1875 the Swedish merchant Dickson fitted out the yacht «Experiment» under the command of Baron Nordenskjöld, which also successfully reached the estuary of the Yenisei. The vessel made the return passage, while the Captain, ascending the Yenisei in a boat to Yeniseisk, went back by land. In the following year Baron Nordenskjöld on the steamer «Himer», and Wiggins on the steamer «Famela» once more safely sailed through into the estuary of the Yenisei.

The late Sidorov having thus obtained the confirmation of the justice of his idea did not himself however for a long time have the chance of making the passage. Only in 1876 did he succeed in fitting out the vessel «Northern Light» under the command of Schwanenberg, which unfortunately suffered shipwreck among the Little Bregovsk Islands. In 1877 another vessel belonging to Sidorov, built in Yeniseisk, the «Dawn» under the command of the same Schwanenberg, sailed from the estuary of the Yenisei and safely arrived in St. Petersburg. In the same year Trapeznikov's steamer the «Louisa» sailing from Hull, on the 18th of July passed through the Kara Straits without mishap, and having entered the mouth of the Obi penetrated by the Irtysh to Tobolsk, with a cargo of iron and olive oil. At the same time Sibiakov chartered the steamer «Frazer» in Bremen, which landed safely on the 21st of August at the mouth of the Yenisei a cargo of tobacco, sugar, machinery, et cetera. In 1878 the «Fra-

zer» repeated her voyage with the same success. At the same time Baron Nordenskjöld's second expedition took place. This navigator in the steamer «Vega» made the voyage from Transen through the whole Arctic Ocean and returned to Europe after circumnavigating the continent of Europe-Asia.

Subsequently there were not a few other successful expeditions of this kind. In the same year, 1878, two large European steamers entered the mouth of the Obi with colonial wares and iron goods, in exchange for which they took cargoes of wheat and hemp. Knop's steamers the «Tsaritsa» and the «Moscow» entered the mouth of the Yenisei, the latter reaching Yeniseisk. Nordenskjöld's steamer the «Lena» entered the mouth of the river of the same name and ascended as far as Yakutsk having thus sailed 2,700 versts from the mouth.

In consequence of such results, sea communication between Europe and Siberia by the Arctic Ocean appeared to be completely established, although there were still not a few accidents to ships attempting to make their way to Siberia by this new route. In 1887 in Newcastle a company was formed for establishing commercial relations with Siberia, and with this object it equipped the steamer «Phoenix» which successfully reached Yeniseisk. This first expedition, in consequence of the unfortunate choice of goods, was in a commercial sense a failure for the company, but nevertheless the latter having become more nearly acquainted through its agents with the needs of Siberia and its productions, fitted out in the following year the steamer «Labrador», which was to carry its cargo to the mouth of the Yenisei and there receive Siberian goods from the «Phoenix». But neither of these steamers attained its object and the company incurred considerable losses and soon wound up its affairs. The ill success of this company did not however quell the desire of the enterprising Englishmen to again try their luck, and with this object once more an Anglo-Siberian Company was formed, which despatched a steamer to the mouth of the Yenisei with a cargo of assorted goods. In consequence of an accidental concurrence of various unfortunate circumstances, notwithstanding even the granting of the right of duty-free importation of goods into the northern ports of Siberia during five years, the new company also had no success in a commercial sense and was obliged to wind up its affairs.

Thus, the result of these attempts was the positive establishment of the fact of the possibility without extraordinary difficulty of sea communication between Europe and Asia via the Arctic Ocean. But the commercial advantage of the employment of this route remains so far a thing of the future. In conclusion it is not out of place to remark in connexion with the north sea passage to Siberia, that Sidorov first pointed out the importance of stoking steamers for polar expeditions with petroleum and in 1872 inaugurated this system in Archangel, intending to employ the liquid fuel of local origin, but the expedition then planned by him, as was mentioned, did not take place.

The Pacific coast of Siberia did not present any difficulties in the way of regular sea communication, but here this undertaking could not be developed in consequence of quite different causes. Till the end of the seventies the communication between European Russia and Siberia through the Pacific Ocean had a more or less accidental character. The establishment of steam communication with the Far East, undertaken in 1870 by the Russian Steam Navigation and Trade Company, did not possess any serious commercial importance. This undertaking

also assumed large dimensions only from the moment when the Volunteer Fleet established regular communication between Odessa and Vladivostok, calling at several Chinese ports on the way. This institution, called into existence in 1878 during the last Eastern war with the object of performing the duty of cruisers in war time and having commercial objects in time of peace, certainly gave a great impulse to the connecting of European Russia with the Far East, and strengthened the influence of Russia in the waters of the Pacific Ocean.

The Volunteer Fleet, whose ships are completely adapted to long ocean voyages, is every year increasing its activity in the conveyance of passengers and goods from the ports of the Black Sea to Vladivostok and Nikolaevsk. The number of persons carried hardly reaching 1,300 in 1882, in 1892 rose to 7,000, while the quantity of cargo for the same period rose from 4,800 to 780,000 pouds. This is, in no small degree, due to the comparatively low freights for a distance of over 10,000 English miles, a voyage taking about 40 days. The cabin passenger pays 500 roubles, including food for the voyage from Odessa to Vladivostok; the deck passenger, 100 roubles for the same distance, also with food. Cargo is charged 30 to 40 kopecks a poud.

Now the Volunteer Fleet disposes of nine steamers, with a total tonnage of 30,000 tons, and nevertheless it barely satisfies the demands made upon it. Thanks to its activity, Eastern Siberia now receives a mass of necessary articles from European Russia and not from abroad, and European Russia gets Chinese tea much cheaper than by land.

The survey of the land communications must necessarily be short. In virtue of historically constituted circumstances but one road passes through Siberia, at all deserving attention, this being the so-called Great Siberian Tract, joining Moscow with Irkutsk, or more exactly with Kiakhta, as over it more than anything else are transported the teas going from China through Kiakhta. Within the actual limits of Siberia it commences at Tiumen and passes through Yalutorovsk, Ishim, Tiukalinsk, Kainsk, Kolyvan, Tomsk, Mariinsk, Achinsk, Krasnoyarsk, Nizhneoudinsk. In this direction also took place the principal colonization of Siberia. Hence one road goes to Kiakhta and continues further into the Celestial Empire, while another goes to Baikal, upon which in summer there is steam communication, and in winter by sledge. There is also a road round Baikal passing through an extremely irregular country. Further on, the post road from Verkneoudinsk to Sretensk traverses very difficult places, where sometimes no snow whatever falls, in consequence of which in winter the driver is not seldom obliged here to carry his sledge on a cart, or on the other hand to put the cart on runners. The thinness of the population in the country along this road, inhabited mainly by vagrants, makes the conveyance of freights extremely difficult and expensive. From this point to Khabarovka the road follows the Amour, but few make any use of it. In summer, people prefer to take advantage of the water communication, in winter they travel in sledges over the ice, and only the break-up of the ice or some other hard necessity, forces them to turn to the natural earth road. The further communication with the terminal points of Siberia, Nikolaevsk and Vladivostok, is carried on in summer by water and in winter on the ice. In autumn and spring almost all communication is stopped here.

From the route just mentioned, especially from the Great Siberian Tract, at various points branch lesser tracts serving as feeders, but not one of them is distinguished by the

necessary good organization, nor possesses any great commercial importance. In the latter respect, a certain interest is presented by two routes leading from Western Siberia through the Altai into Mongolia. Of these the Chuisk tract, serving as the chief artery for the commercial traffic between Western Siberia and Mongolia, proceeds from Biisk by the valley of the river Chuya near the Imperial frontier to Kobdo and Ulyasutai, and for a distance of 240 versts, from Biisk to Angoudai, offers a pretty fair carriage road, while beyond this point to Kosh-Agach, 220 versts, it is only available for the passage of beasts of burden. The second or Bukhtarminsk tract, also terminating at Kobdo, leads from the territory of Semipalatinsk through the Bukhtarminsk camp, the Ulan-Daba pass and Khongo. This road from Ust-Kamenogorsk to the settlement of Urylsk, a distance of 382 versts, is available for wheeled traffic, its continuation being a mere track for pack-animals.



## CHAPTER XV.

**The Great Siberian Railway.**

Historical review of the question of a Siberian railway; first proposals in reference to the construction of the road; the northern, middle and southern directions; the proposals of the engineers Ostrovsky and Sidensner; position of the question in 1890; commencement of the line at Vladivostok; position of the railway works on the 10th of March, 1893.

**A**FTER the annexation of the extensive Amour and Littoral territories and of the Ussuri region, the want was felt of good ways of communication, on the one hand in order to keep possession of them, and on the other, in order to attract settlers and form new centres of population. In consequence of this a series of schemes appeared for the construction of new roads in Siberia, and Count Mouraviev-Amourski himself was almost the first who conceived the idea of a railway in this country. Upon the occupation of the mouths of the Amour in 1850, and especially after the successful expeditions of Count Mouraviev himself down that river, the inconveniences of the estuary for the entry into the river began to become evident, and accordingly there arose the idea of making use of the splendid bay of De Castri in the Tartar Straits and of uniting it with Sofisk on the Amour by a carriage road with the intention of subsequently converting it into a railway. The surveys in this locality and the scheme for such a road were carried out in 1857 by Colonel Romanov, but the road itself was not destined to be realized for want of means. Simultaneously with this appeared the proposal of the English engineer Dull. He conceived the idea of carrying a horse tramway from Nizhni-Novgorod through Kazan and Perm to one of the Siberian ports of the Pacific Ocean, but this scheme, unsupported by any estimates, was obviously of too unsubstantial a character, and the Government accordingly passed it over in silence.

In the same year another foreigner, the American citizen Collins, petitioned the Government to authorize him to found a stock-company; to be styled the Amour Railway Company, to unite Irkutsk and Chita. For the realization of this enterprise Collins wished to issue shares of 100 roubles calculating upon getting all the necessary capital subscribed in Siberia itself. This scheme, although likewise destitute of any solid foundation, thanks to the sympathetic attitude of the then Governor-General Count Mouraviev, was examined on the very shortest notice both in the Ministry of Ways of Communication and in the Siberian Com-

mittee, but in both institutions, albeit on different grounds, it was found to be inopportune and was rejected.

The third proposal following close upon the second in 1858 aimed at uniting by rail Moscow and the Tartar Straits on the Pacific shore of Siberia. The authors of this scheme were the Englishmen, Morrison, Horn and Sleigh, who without demanding any guarantee of income from the Government yet petitioned for such considerable privileges, that their granting would have led to the concentration of the whole Siberian trade and industry in the hands of foreigners for a very long period. At the same time they gave the Government no guarantee for the timely and successful accomplishment of the work contemplated. On more intimate acquaintance with the said proposal it appeared that it was founded upon no preliminary surveys. On this ground the Government did not find it deserving of attention and informed the proposers of the scheme that the construction of a railway from Nizhni-Novgorod to the Tartar Bay did not enter into the plans of the Government and therefore could not be accepted.

The question of the Siberian railway aroused a lively interest in official and private circles, and therefore there was no lack of new, more or less imposing propositions. In the same year, 1858, appeared Sofronov's scheme, to carry a railway from Saratov through the Kirghiz steppes to Semipalatinsk, Minusinsk, Selenginsk, the Amour and Peking. Against it there then appeared in print many objections in which was pointed out among other things the necessity of taking the line along the Great Siberian Tract, which had existed from time immemorial, crossing the Ural and connecting Nizhni-Novgorod with Kiakhta. Sofronov's scheme, like all the preceding ones, was a paper scheme and not the result of actual investigation of the trading and industrial needs of the localities, through which this mighty route was to pass. Submitted to Count Mouraviev-Aimoursky's consideration, it called forth several corrections and additions, but had no practical consequences.

Of a much more practical character was the undertaking proposed by Kokorev and Co., who in 1862, having formed the idea of uniting the basins of the Volga and the Obi, these two giant streams of European Russia and Siberia, availed themselves of the scheme of the mining engineer Rashet, for a long time head of the Government and private mining works in the Ural, and perfectly acquainted with that district. The surveys carried out with reference to this scheme pointed to the following line, from Perm via the Nizhni-Tagil works to Tiumen, 678 versts with a branch to Irbit, 13 versts. This scheme, completely satisfying the demands of the through route, appeared to be the most desirable for the whole Ural mining industry, whose representatives received it very favourably. However, soon afterwards the same men abandoned the direction indicated by Rashet's schemes and adopted another proposed by Colonel Bogdanovich.

The latter's plan was one of the results of his despatch in 1866 to the government of Viatka to take measures against the injurious consequences of the crop failure which befell that country in 1864. After only two months from his departure from St. Petersburg, Bogdanovich reported by telegraph to the Minister of the Interior on the 23rd of March, 1866, as follows: «After removing all difficulties in the provisioning of the governments of Perm and Viatka and investigating the local conditions, I am of opinion that the only sure means of

preventing famine in the Ural country in the future is the building of a railway from the governments of the interior to Ekaterinburg and thence to Tiumen. Such a line, being subsequently continued through Siberia to the Chinese frontier would acquire a great importance both strategical and for international trade». Afterwards, on the receipt from Bogdanovich of a more detailed report on the subject, it was in April, 1868, thought good to authorize the said person to carry out detailed surveys and form a scheme for a railway from the village of Yershov through Ekaterinburg to Tiumen. The original project was somewhat hastily draughted and therefore the author subsequently had to make several corrections and additions in it.

The two schemes referred to, powerfully affecting the interests of different parts of Siberia, called into existence a third in 1869, that of the trader Liubimov. The latter carried out surveys from Perm through the towns of Kungur, Ekaterinburg and Shadrinsk to the hamlet of Bieloozersk, situated 49 versts to the north of Kurgan on the river Tobol, a distance of 711 versts. There was at the same time in view to carry from the main line a side mining branch in a northern direction from Ekaterinburg through the Nizhni-Tagil works to the Kushvinsk Government works, over a length of 131 versts.

The then Governor-General of Western Siberia, Adjutant General Khruschov also directed attention to the carrying out of these surveys closely affecting the country entrusted to his care, and having become acquainted on the spot with the direction of trade and its needs, presented at the end of 1869 a memorial addressed to the Emperor upon the necessity of the rapid solution of the question of the building of the Siberian railway, pointing out at the same time the nearest route for it through Nizhni-Novgorod to Kazan and Tiumen.

Thus at the end of the sixties, upon the question of the construction of a Siberian railway there were sharply defined the three above mentioned routes according to the schemes respectively of Rashet, Liubimov and Bogdanovich. All three begin at Perm, and they end, the first and third, in the town of Tiumen, and the second at Bieloozersk on the river Tobol, which it was proposed to make navigable. In the numerous discussions of these schemes in scientific societies and in literature, the first route was named the Northern, the second the Middle, and the third the Southern. Although no small number of preliminary surveys were made in all these directions, yet when in connection with the above mentioned report of Adjutant General Khruschov, this question began to be discussed in the higher Government spheres it was found possible in the first place to build only a part of the line projected, 700 versts in length, in order to join the Kama with the Tobol.

In order to form an opinion from the mass of not fully elaborated and not always exact data collected during the carrying out of private surveys, as well as to determine the most advantageous route for this line, a special commission was fitted out to the Ural, for whom the satisfaction of the needs of the Ural mining industry was to have the greatest weight, while at the same time it was pointed out to them that the road must, although to a slight extent, only answer to the requirements of the Siberian transit trade. However on a closer acquaintance with the matter it appeared that these objects are incompatible and therefore the preference was given to the Ural railway, the question of the Siberian road



remaining open for some time. The surveys afterwards carried out in 1872—1874 by the Government established three principal routes: 1. Kineshma, Viatka, Perm, Ekaterinburg, 933 versts; 2. Nizhni, Kazan, Krasnoufimsk, Ekaterinburg, 1,172 versts; 3. Alaty, Ufa, Cheliabinsk, 1,173 versts. Thus, the first route proves to be a development of Mr. Raset's scheme, that is, of the northern; the second, the altered scheme of Mr. Bogdanovich, or the southern; and finally the third, a compromise for the simultaneous satisfaction of the requirements of the Siberian and Central Asiatic transit traffic. The Committee of Ministers on examining these routes had its attention arrested mainly by the first two, and in 1875 it was decided to carry the Siberian railway by the route from Nizhni-Novgorod along the hilly bank of the Volga to Kazan, Ekaterinburg and Tiumen.

It will be appropriate to observe here that the choice of the direction for the Siberian railway between north and south everywhere called forth very lively discussions. Various pamphlets appeared arguing for and against the said routes, the constant subject of dispute being not the direction of the railway in the Siberian territory, but its direction within the limits of European Russia. From the above quoted enumeration of the routes it is clear that all the proposals agreed in this, that whencesoever the line of railway begin, it must necessarily pass through Tiumen. Further than this point few went, and few interested themselves whether the line led through the southern steppes and traversed cultivated centres or extended through the thickets of the north, while only passing through the most important places.

In consequence of such being the situation of a matter so deeply interesting to Siberia, the higher administrative authorities of the country more than once raised the question of the immediate laying down of railway communication between different very important points of the country. Thus already in 1875, a petition was started to build a railway from Vladivostok to lake Khanko, which was followed by a lively correspondence in higher Government spheres upon the construction of railways by preference in Eastern Siberia within the territory of the Littoral and the Ussuri region, especially in view of the development in all directions of China and Japan. However the then difficult position of the Imperial finances did not permit of immediately proceeding to the realization of such desirable propositions.

Continuing to discuss the most advantageous route for the Siberian line, the Government at the same time did not cease to occupy itself with the enlargement of the general system of railways, which in 1877 already reached Orenburg. In the following year, 1878, the Ural railway was opened, and in 1880 was completed the imposing structure of the Emperor Alexander II bridge across the Volga, while finally in the same year, ensued an Imperial command for the immediate building of the section of railway between Ekaterinburg and Tiumen. The accomplishment of the above named constructions in connexion with the results of new surveys showed that the southern route for the Siberian railway, sanctioned in 1875, on account of altered circumstances, could no longer answer to its destination. Accordingly in 1882 the discussion of the Siberian main line was begun afresh, which demanded the carrying out of supplementary surveys in several new directions, so that in 1884 the possibility appeared of presenting the three following routes instead of the southern. Of these, the first

was from Nizhni-Novgorod through Kazan, the Nikoloberezovsk wharf and Ekaterinburg to Tiumen, the second, from Samara via Ufa, Krasnoufinsk and Ekaterinburg to Tiumen, and the third, from Samara through Ufa, Zlatoust, to Cheliabinsk. The choice of one of these three directions would predetermine to a certain extent that of the main Siberian line itself, and at the same time to decide this question finally, without having sufficient data on the route which Siberian freights would take on the completion of the Ekaterinburg-Tiumen line then under construction, joining the basins of the Volga and the Obi, and also in consequence of the imminent completion of the Obi-Yenisei canal for the uniting of the basins of the Obi and Yenisei, did not seem possible. Really the realization of these two works was opening over a vast extent a water route connecting the basin of the Volga with lake Baikal, and consequently must have a serious influence upon the direction to be taken by the railway line right through Siberia. On the other hand arose the question, was there any necessity, with the existence of excellent water communication, for the immediate construction of an unbroken line of railway through the whole of Siberia, and was it not better to be content in the first instance with the building of isolated sections possessing some political strategical or industrial importance.

In this last respect the schemes put forth by the engineers Ostrovsky and Sidensner deserve particular attention. The former presented his proposal in the beginning of 1880; he maintained the idea that at that time, for the consolidation and economical development of Siberia and its relations with Russia, it was necessary above all things to improve and facilitate the internal communications of Siberia and only then complete the routes of transit then in existence upon this side of the Ural. Under the existing circumstances he saw no need for an unbroken line of railway right through Siberia. The author saw the solution of these problems merely in the quickest possible construction of the following three roads: Perm-Tobolsk, to unite the two large rivers Kama and Irtysh; Tomsk-Krasnoyarsk, to unite the Obi and the Yenisei, and finally the third, Omsk-Barnaoul, to unite the Irtysh at Omsk with the Obi at Barnaoul, with its continuation to Biisk, and further to the frontiers of China. On the creation of the two first lines, for an extent of 800 and 560 versts respectively, extensive communication is opened between the basin of the Volga and that of lake Baikal, this union being effected not with the aid of shallow and not always navigable rivers, but through the Kama and the Irtysh which never lack water.

The engineer Ostrovsky ascribed special importance to the Omsk-Barnaoul line. This line would shorten the great water road from the immensely rich mining district of Altai to Tobolsk and would strengthen the trade with China through Biisk, Kobdo and Ulyasutai. Only by taking advantage to the largest extent of the water ways of Siberia would be realized a cheap and convenient communication between the centre of Siberia, Irkutsk and the centre of European Russia, Moscow. The direct union by an unbroken line of railway of the two centres referred to will become urgent and realizable only in the more or less distant future, and beyond controversy only on Siberia attaining a higher degree of civilization than at present. Having examined the conditions which this imposing construction must satisfy, the engineer Ostrovsky indicates in general terms its direction from Moscow to Irkutsk as follows: «The road should pass through Riazan, Spassk, Ufa and thence through Zlatoust, Cheliaba, Petro-

pavlovsk, Omsk, Kainsk, Tomsk, Mariinsk, Achinsk, Krasnoyarsk, Kansk, Udinsk and Balagansk to Irkutsk. It will thus, throughout its whole extent, meet all the chief administrative and trading centres of Siberia, will nowhere quit the zone of densest population and will traverse almost exclusively the fertile chernoziom tract, from the Volga to the Yenisei. The construction of the southern line might be accomplished in separate sections, each of which might be completed independently of the rest, preserving its own proper importance».

The route quoted of the Siberian railway indicated by the engineer Ostrovsky deserves attention in this respect that it almost exactly coincides with that which is now finally adopted for the Great Siberian Railway.

The engineer Sidensner, who took part in the expedition for carrying out the surveys in connection with the construction of the Obi-Yenisei canal, expressed the opinion that with the realization of this work and the removal of the rapids in the lower part of the Angara a vast water way would be opened of 5,000 versts extent, from Tiumen to Baikal. Next from Baikal begins the coast road to Sretensk of 950 versts: and there again, a new water way by the Amour for 3,000 versts. Discussing in detail the cart road, Sidensner draws the conclusion that as a matter of fact it may be considerably shortened, as the first 150 versts pass by the shore of Baikal and the valley of the navigable river Serenga, and the last 350 versts along the shore of the raftable river Ingoda and in part of the Shilka. Thus, the road is reduced to 450 versts, and even here, from the happy direction of many shallow rivers which can easily be made navigable, there only remains the pass across the Yablonovoi range from the Areisk Lake to the settlement of Tanginsk, a distance of 18 versts; and only over this small section will it be necessary to build a railway to unite by a water route the basin of the Volga with the Pacific shore of Siberia. The proposition to carry out surveys in this direction, although met with favour, in consequence of the want of means could not be accepted.

Yet many more schemes were presented, which were discussed both in Government spheres and in scientific societies, but the majority of them suffered from a lack of actual foundation. Special commissions were organized in the Imperial Russian Technical Society and in the Society for Promoting Russian Trade and Industry, which laboured very long upon the consideration of the questions of the route and cost of the Siberian Railway, but to write about all the schemes placed before these meetings, would take up very much time; they fill books. The principal directions are marked upon the map appended to this work, omitting the variations whose name is legion.

Independently of the schemes proposed by private persons, several Governors-General of Siberia began vehemently to urge the necessity of building different sections of the line. Among these petitions, particularly noteworthy are the schemes for sections of the way from Tomsk to Irkutsk and from Baikal to Sretensk put forth by Baron Korf and Count Ignatiev, intended to unite the Western Siberian navigation with that of Eastern Siberia on the Amour. To these two sections a third was soon added, from Vladivostok through Razdolnoe, Nikolskoe, and Anuchino to the Busse Post. The surveys carried out in these directions only touched the technical side of the matter, leaving the economical entirely aside; in consequence of which in 1887 it was not considered possible to proceed to the preparatory works for the carrying out of the schemes referred to. An exception was made only in reference to the

Ussuri line, the construction of which was put in the first rank. This question was in 1890 placed for consideration before a Special Commission, which was also charged with elucidating in what order the different sections should be built, in order as far as possible to lighten the sacrifices of the treasury and draw the greatest advantages from the working of those sections which should be constructed first. In the Special Commission at the end of 1890, when the system of Russian railways projected eastwards in three lines whose extreme points were Tiumen on the Ural line, Miass on that of Zlatoust-Miass, and Orenburg on the Orenburg line, on the discussion of the question of the conditions of the construction of the Great Siberian Railway new circumstances cropped up which somewhat altered the former view of the matter. Strategical views partly gave way before considerations of an economical and commercial character, it being at the same time declared that the aim of the creation of the Siberian railway should consist not so much in the opening in Siberia of new markets for the sale of the productions of European Russia, as in affording Siberia itself the possibility of marching along the road of normal economical development and placing that vast country, so richly endowed by nature but bereft of convenient ways of communication, as far as possible in the same conditions as those which European Russia at present enjoys. Only in close economic communion with European Russia could Siberia grow and develop. On the other hand, European Russia in economical relation with Siberia would draw upon new sources for its development and enrichment.

The commencement of the Siberian railway from the east, that is, from the Ussuri section would not completely answer to the objects laid down, and it was therefore recognized as more expedient to begin this great work simultaneously from the opposite ends in the east and west. The terminus of the line at its eastern end was one starting point, namely Vladivostok, and about this there were no differences of opinion and no disputes. Other point, to the slightest extent suitable for the purpose, there is none upon the Pacific shore of Siberia.

The choice, on the other hand, of the western terminus offered a more difficult problem, which however at last was reduced to the selection of one of the three above mentioned points with which the railway system of European Russia terminated towards the east. From whatever point the Siberian railway was begun, on continuing it into the depth of the country, all three variants must necessarily join approximately at a point near Nizhneudinsk, as is shown upon the annexed map.

Choosing Tiumen as the point of departure the line must be carried to Yalutorovsk and Kainsk, leaving Tomsk by the way, as the taking of it in a more northerly direction, to Tomsk, is excessively difficult in consequence of a desert region covered with forests and swamps. Further on, the line must go to Mariinsk, Krasnoyarsk and Nizhneoudinsk. The distance from Tiumen to the last point is 3,474 versts. If the starting point chosen be the station of Miass, the road will pass through Kurgan, Kainsk, Kolyvan, Mariinsk, Krasnoyarsk and Nizhneoudinsk. The total distance is in this case 2,683 versts. Finally, selecting Orenburg, the line must be taken to Orsk, Atbassar, Akmolinsk, Pavlodar, Biisk, Minousinsk and Nizhneoudinsk. The total extent of the road by this route is 3,400 versts.

Comparing the advantages and excellences of laying down the line in these three directions, the following is the result. Uniting the Siberian road with Tiumen without

connecting it with the general system deprives it of the importance of a line of transit. But if the Ural line be produced from Perm to Nizhni, then in the first place, this distance of 1,000 versts will cost about 71,000,000 roubles, and in the second, the said line from its technical conditions will present many difficulties in the way of profitable through goods traffic. The second route is 791 versts shorter than the preceding, and besides this, embraces the most populous parts of Western Siberia with a chernozom and exceedingly fertile zone producing much more grain than is required on the spot. The third route traversing several large administrative and industrial centres at the same time passes through a very unsuitable region in its western half. For about 1,500 versts the line goes through waterless, thinly populated steppes little adapted to civilized life, where in winter rage the fiercest winds, in consequence of which there are frequent snow drifts. In its eastern half this route intersects an extensive mountainous district and the carrying through it of a railway will require a crowd of technical complications and an increase in the cost of construction connected therewith. With all this the route in question is 717 versts longer than the preceding. Thus all the advantages proved to be in favour of prolonging the Samara-Zlatoust-Miass railway through Cheliabinsk, Kurgan and so on.

In consequence of all the above, the question of the construction of the Great Siberian Railway was resolved on the 21st of February, 1891, in the sense of proceeding in the same year to the building, by direct order of the Treasury, of the railway from the station of Miass to the completion of the Zlatoust-Miass line in construction to Cheliabinsk, and to the carrying out of surveys from Cheliabinsk to Tomsk or some other point of the middle Siberian section. Finally, by an Imperial rescript given the 17th of March, 1891, in the name of his Imperial Highness the Tsarevich, the question of the construction of the Great Siberian Railway was finally and irrevocably decided in the affirmative.

The Gracious Will of His Majesty the Emperor, clearly expressed in this rescript, put an end to many years of hesitation and doubt as to the accomplishment of the said great undertaking, and now the Government has taken all the necessary measures for the most successful realization possible of this good conception, which has a perfect right to take one of the first places among the most extensive and important enterprises of the expiring century, not only in this country but in the whole world.

The above quoted Imperial rescript was promulgated by the Grand Duke the Tsarevich on the 12th of May, 1891, in Vladivostok, and then His Imperial Highness laid the first stone of this mighty work. In the same year extensive surveys were commenced from the west and the east, and the possibility soon appeared of establishing the following order for the construction of the Great Siberian Railway. The realization of the enterprise was divided into three shifts. To the first was referred the construction of the Western Siberian section from Cheliabinsk to the river Obi, an extent of 1,328 versts, and of the middle Siberian section from the river Obi to the town of Irkutsk, a distance of 1,754 versts, as well as the completion of the section Vladivostok-Grafskaya, in course of construction, and the building of the connecting line between the Ural Mines line and the Siberian railway. To the second shift was counted the construction of the sections from Grafskaya to Khabarovka, 347 versts long, and from the station of Mysovskaya, the point of departure of the line on the other side of Baikal, to

Sretensk, a distance of 1,009 versts. To the third shift belongs the building of the Circum-baikal line, 292 versts in length, and from Sretensk to Khabarovka, about 2,000 versts. The works of the first shift are to be completed not later than the year 1900.

The order of construction received the Imperial sanction on the 10th of December, 1892, and on the 10th of March of the present year, 1893, the construction of the Great Siberian Railway was in the following state.

1. The first section of the Western Siberian Railway from the town of Cheliabinsk to the town of Omsk, distance 747 versts.

a. The personal staff of engineers completely organized and already on the spot; b. The alienation of land begun, and signed declarations obtained from the owners as to the compensation required by them; c. The work in connection with the removal of earth given to contractors; navvies hired for the whole extent of the section, and excavators delivered on the spot; earth removed to the extent of 218,000 cubic sages or about 20 per cent of the whole quantity; d. Timber cut for the wooden bridges, and cast-iron pipes and iron ordered for the bridges across the rivers Tobol and Ishim; a considerable part of the wooden bridges built for a distance of 240 versts between Cheliabinsk and Kurgan; e. Four hundred thousand sleepers made and 50 per cent of this quantity delivered on the line; f. The laying of the telegraph begun, and already opened for use from Cheliabinsk to Kurgan for a length of 240 versts; g. Material in course of preparation for the buildings on the line and at the stations; h. Twenty thousand casks of cement obtained, and bolts ordered for the whole section.

2. The second section of the Western Siberian Railway from the town of Omsk to the river Obi, a distance of 579 versts.

a. Personal staff of engineers organized; b. Earth-works contracted for the first 100 versts from the town of Omsk; c. Negotiations being carried on with the works for the supply of cement and iron for the bridges and with owners of steamers for the carriage of railway requisites by the Obi water system from Tiumen to Omsk on the river Irtysh and to Krivoshchekovo on the Obi.

3. First section of the Middle Siberian Railway from the river Obi to the town of Krasnoyarsk, a distance of 724 versts.

a. Parties of engineers organized and despatched to the scene of the works for carrying out final surveys and works; b. Earth-works contracted for a distance of 65 versts, the amount of 270,000 cubic sages, and navvies hired for carrying out the work with the means at hand; c. Twenty-four thousand casks of cement obtained; d. Negotiations concluded with owners of steamers of the Obi system for the delivery at the village of Krivoshchekovo on the Obi of the cement already obtained and of the iron materials from the Ural and other

works; e. To ensure the works being duly supplied with timber an order issued to proceed to the felling of avenues in the forests and negotiations in course with timber merchants in reference to the building on one of the raftable rivers of a saw mill and the rafting from the head waters of the rivers Obi and Tom of the timber prepared partly by the means at hand, and partly by contract.

4. Ussuri line, a distance of 382 versts.

a. Earth-works carried out to the extent of 380,000 cubic sages, or 52 per cent of the total quantity, and laying of pipes and bridges 4,260 cubic sages or 65 per cent; b. Sleepers and rails with bolts ordered to the full amount and 20 versts of railway from Vladivostok laid down; c. All the civil buildings in course of construction; d. Rolling stock ordered to the full amount and partly delivered at the scene of operations.

5. Transbaikal Railway, a distance of 1,009 versts.

Parties of engineers organized and despatched to the scene of the works to carry out the final surveys.

6. Siberian Railway from Cheliabinsk to Irkutsk.

a. Ordered 7,400,000 pounds of rails from Ural and European Russian Works, of which 186,000 pounds are received at the works; negotiations in course for the order of the remaining 400,000 pounds required; b. Ordered of various works 148 eight-wheeled engines and 2,300 covered freight cars, and negotiations in course for delivery of the remaining 1,811 cars and platform trucks.

As for, finally, the question of the building of the connecting branch between the Siberian and Ural railways, for its elucidation and for the determining the initial and terminal points of the said line a careful survey will be made on the spot in the course of the present year. It may be further added that there exist three variants of the connecting link, which are shown on the map, namely Ekaterinburg-Miass, Ekaterinburg-Cheliabinsk and Ostrovskaya-Cheliabinsk. The exact cost of this work of course cannot be defined until the final designation of the initial and terminal points of the route is adopted, but it is approximately assumed at 7,000,000 to 8,000,000 roubles, with the condition of the completion of the whole construction in 1894.



## CHAPTER XVI.

**Topographical and technical features of the Great Siberian Railway.**

The Cheliabinsk-Obi; Obi-Irkutsk; Irkutsk-Mysovsk; Mysovsk-Sretensk; Sretensk-Khabarovka; Khabarovka-Grafsk; Grafsk-Vladivostok; the general cost of the seven Cheliabinsk-Vladivostok sections.

FROM Cheliabinsk the line leads to the town of Kurgan in the government of Tobolsk, only diverting from the straight line in order to avoid deep valleys, lakes, marshes and bogs. Further on, the railway is projected to pass through the town of Petropavlovsk to Omsk with the same indispensable departures from the straight line, and at a distance of 5 versts from Omsk it crosses the Irtysh on a bridge 300 sagues long. After crossing the Irtysh the line enters the Barabinsk steppe, passing through the governments of Tobolsk and Tomsk, through the town of Kainsk, up to the village of Krivoschekov close to which it crosses the Obi on a bridge of 400 sagues long, at verst 1325.

The section of the Siberian railway from the town of Cheliabinsk to the Obi, with some few exceptions, runs through a fertile zone of chernoziom where climatic conditions are favourable to the cultivation of cereals, especially within the borders of the Ishimsk and Barabinsk steppes, where during the whole length of the line as far as the Obi, a distance of 1,325 versts, there are hardly any obstacles to interfere with the laying down of the line; and only the spanning of four large rivers, the Tobol, Ishim, Irtysh and Obi, necessitates some large earth works and expensive bridges. On account of the level character of the ground through which the line runs, the limiting gradients do not exceed 0.0074 and the radii of the curves, 250 sagues on this part of the line. After crossing the Obi, the line as far as the town of Achinsk, a distance of 551 versts, wends its way through a hilly country and has to cross five considerable rivers, the Obi, Tom, Yaya, Kiya and Chulyim; it was nevertheless found possible here to limit the gradients to 0.008 and the radii of the curves to 250 sagues, without greatly increasing the amount of earth work. Further on, from Achinsk to the town of Irkutsk, a distance of 1,191 versts, the character of the country completely changes and assumes a mountainous aspect. The line is obliged to cross two large rivers, the Chulyim and Yenisei, and also numerous tributaries of these rivers. Most of the Siberian streams in this part of



the country run from south to north, whilst the general direction of the railway is from west to east, and therefore the line must intersect the whole of the spot summit levels of these rivers, only excepting the valleys of some small streams which flow to the east or west. These spot summit levels, composed of the branches of the Altai, Gremiachevsk, Yeuisseisk and Sayansk chains, are very high and sometimes so narrow that there is no possibility of diminishing the steepness of the incline. It was therefore found necessary in the sections of the line from Achinsk to Nizhneoudinsk, a distance of 710 versts, and from the station of Uktouisk situated at verst 2,822 to the station of Polovina, at verst 2,968, a distance of 146 versts, or 856 versts altogether, to plan the line with gradients of 0.015, and curves of 150 sagenes radius, and to allow curves of 130 sagenes radius in some places on the ascent from the Great Kemchug river from verst 1,948 to verst 1,954; and on the descent from the spot summit level to the Little Ibruil and Little Kemchug rivers, from verst 1,967 to verst 1,982, the radius of curvature was decreased to 120 sagenes. At verst 2,100 it was again increased to 130 sagenes and on the rest of the line from Nizhneoudinsk to the Uktouisk station and from Polovina station to the town of Irkutsk, altogether a distance of 335 versts the limiting gradients do not exceed 0.009 and the extreme radii of curvature 250 sagenes. A country of this nature entails very considerable earth works; the height of the embankments reaches 9 sagenes, and the numerous ravines and streams necessitate a large amount of constructive works.

The line crosses the Yenisei at verst 2,049 at a spot where the banks are steep and suitable for a bridge, which will be 450 sagenes long. The station of Krasnoyarsk, close to the town of that name, is situated at verst 2,047, before coming to the river. The highest point of the earth works, marked 201.5 sagenes, is situated at verst 1,976, between the Little Ibruil and Little Kemchug rivers, and is 112 sagenes above the level of the river Chulym and 137 sagenes above the Yenisei.

After crossing the Yenisei the line circuits the heights near the town of Krasnoyarsk and begins to ascend to the spot summit level, first along the valley of the Berezovka river, which falls into the Sitik, and thence along the valley of this latter stream, attaining the highest point at verst 2,116. The valleys of the Berezovka and Sitik are enclosed on both sides by high, steep and mostly rocky banks, and the bed of the streams is very winding and in many places changes from one bank to the other, so that the line must either follow the channels of the rivers, or else cross them several times; in such places it is necessary either to strengthen the slopes of the road with stone or to lead off the river; besides this the ravines and the streams falling into the Berezovka and Sitik necessitate numerous bridges and pipes; the length of this ascent is 67 versts, and 82 bridges and pipes will be required. The ascent along the valleys of these rivers is in continuous gradients separated by horizontal spaces and rises 126 sagenes above the level of the railway bridge across the Yenisei. At verst 2,266 the line reaches the town of Kansk, near which there is a station, and then crosses the river Kan on a bridge 200 sagenes long, which is to be built on caisson foundations. The highest point of the spot summit level between the Yenisei and the Kan is marked 200 sagenes, and is 127 sagenes above the level of the Yenisei bridge and 103 sagenes above the level of the bridge over the Kan.

The remaining distance to Nizhneoudinsk, which is at versts 2,584, gives a considerable amount of work in some places; for instance, at versts 2,460 and 2,462 the embankments are 10 sagues high, and on the ascent along the valley of the river Toporka it was found necessary to cross two deep ravines over which wooden viaducts are designed with an opening of 115 and 125 sagues, and a height of 20 sagues.

From Nizhneoudinsk to Uktouisk station the line passes over a more level country and consequently the limiting gradients are fixed at 0.009 and the radii of the curves at 250 sagues. Along this distance the line has to cross three large rivers, the Uda, on a bridge 150 sagues long at verst 2,588, the Iya, on a bridge 100 sagues long at verst 2,706, and the Oka on a bridge 125 sagues long at verst 2,830, and intersects two large spot summit levels between the above mentioned rivers, and several small ones besides. On account of the more even character of the country it is not anticipated that there will be any considerable earth works in this section of the line.

From the river Oka the country is again intersected until the station of Polovina is reached, situated at verst 2,968, and here therefore the technical conditions are those applicable to a mountainous section. From Polovina station to Irkutsk, except for the passages across the valleys of the rivers Belaya and Maltinka, the ground is more level, and therefore the line is laid out according to the conditions of a level section. Descending into the valley of the Belaya for a distance of 10 versts down a continuous incline of 0.009, only broken by one level stretch of 200 sagues, the line crosses this river on a bridge 125 sagues long. The Irkutsk station is planned at verst 3,065 at a distance of 4 versts from the ferry across the Angara, on the post high road from Moscow to Irkutsk, opposite the town of Irkutsk, situated on the right bank of the Angara where the river Irkut falls into it.

The foregoing short description of the route of the Siberian railway section from the Obi to Irkutsk shows that, starting from that river near 55° north latitude, the line follows a north-easterly direction to the town of Mariinsk, and keeping to the 57th parallel reaches the town of Kansk; at this point the line turns abruptly to the south-east and follows this direction to Irkutsk, situated on the 53th parallel. The line passes through the districts of Tomsk and Mariinsk in the government of Tomsk, the Achinsk, Krasnoyarsk and Kansk districts in the government of Yeniseisk and the Nizhneoudinsk and Irkutsk districts in the government of Irkutsk, and takes in the towns of Mariinsk, Achinsk, Krasnoyarsk, Kansk, Nizhneoudinsk and Irkutsk. Starting from Mariinsk the line passes close to the Great Siberian postal highway, along which the communication is kept up between Siberia and European Russia; the railway in some places crosses it and in others diverges a short distance from it, except in the Krasnoyarsk-Kansk section where, on account of the difficult nature of the country, it was in some places necessary to plan the line at a distance of 30 versts from the high road in order to reduce the amount of work required to lay it.

From Irkutsk the line leads to lake Baikal and follows the shore for a distance of 162 versts as far as Mysovsk station. The laying of this section of the line presents considerable difficulties. From verst 3,088 to verst 3,108, before crossing the river Irkut, the line passes along the valley which is flooded by the high waters of this stream. Further on, at verst 3,112, the valley of the Irkut becomes narrow and takes the appearance of a mountain pass

hounded by steep rocky slopes which in some places give way to over-hanging granite crags, in the cuttings of which the line will have to be laid, supported for considerable distances by retaining walls: in many places the slope of the line will fall into the Irkut, which, like all mountain rivers, has a very strong current: here stone dikes will have to be built and the foot of the slope strengthened with retaining walls laid in cement. Further up the river the steepness of the windings of the Irkut increases, so that at verst 3,146 it was necessary to make the line pass through a tunnel 32 sagues long. From verst 3,163 to verst 3,166 the line crosses the Zyrkyzusk chain where it diverts the course of the river Irkut far to the west and forces it to make a loop for a distance of about 30 versts; in order to shorten the line by this distance of 30 versts it is proposed to build a tunnel 1,790 sagues long.

The work of boring the tunnel will take a long time as it is designed with one continuous incline, so that it cannot be bored from both ends. A no less obstacle will be experienced in the construction of the line further on; great difficulty is occasioned by the gorge where the river Ilcha falls into the Kultushnaya, as the curves at the foot of the almost vertical rocks 50 sagues high are so sharp that it is impossible to bring the line round them even with curves of 120 sagues radius, so that it will be necessary to lay the line along part of the channel of the rapid mountain stream of the Ilcha which even forms a waterfall at this point; in addition to this, springs flow out of the rocks and these will have to be led under the line. Here the height of the embankment reaches 16.8 sagues, and the height of the retaining wall 17 sagues, which on account of the nature of the locality must be laid in cement. This mountainous character of the ground continues from where the river Kultushnaya falls into lake Baikal to the Bystraya station, 3,212 versts from the town of Cheliabinsk. Along the whole of the mountainous section all the cuttings will have to be made in hard rocky ground, such as granite, gneiss, sandstone, and the like, and in some places the embankments will have to be made of stone, as there is no soft soil at hand. The greatest depth of the excavations in this section is 11 sagues, and 15 sagues at the entrance of the tunnel, and the largest embankments have a height of 16.8 sagues.

From verst 3,212 the line follows the shore of lake Baikal, and although it loses its mountainous character, it crosses in many places the branches of the mountain chains leading to lake Baikal. In some places the track is close to the shore and in others at a little distance from it; sometimes it is necessary to lay the line close to the edge of the water, partly taking advantage of the rocky shoals and partly holding on to the rocks; in those places where the shoals at the foot of the rocks completely cease, the hatter of the road hed slopes directly into the water, and in such cases requires strengthening from the destructive action of the waves by means of blocks of rock or crihwork filled with stone. Finally there are places along the shore of lake Baikal through which the line passes that are of a marshy character, overgrown with wood. All along the shore of the lake the line will have to cross numerous streams with rapid currents forming small torrents in places where stones, brought down by the current, have accumulated; all this will entail a large amount of constructive work and the innumerable spring which gush out of the rocks surrounding the lake will require a vast expenditure of lahour to lead the water off from the road bed.

In consequence of these difficult topographical features of the country, the Irkutsk-Mysovsk section requires 1,000,000 cubic sagesnes of earth work, or almost 3,690 cubic sagesnes per verst, costing 4,772,000 roubles; in addition to this, 235,000 cubic sagesnes, or about 800 cubic sagesnes per verst, of cuttings in stony ground have to be done; also 24,800 cubic sagesnes of masonry have to be laid in the retaining walls, and 4,950 cubic sagesnes of this must be built with hydraulic cement, and the remainder, dry. The country through which this section of the line passes is completely desert, excepting the town of Irkutsk and some small settlements on the shores of lake Baikal. Although the climate is severe, the proximity of such an enormous quantity of water causes a great deal of moisture to be deposited, so that the ground is covered with a thick and early layer of snow in consequence of which that eternally frozen subsoil, which is found further along the Siberian railway, is not met with here.

From Mysovsk harbour on the southern shore of Lake Baikal the line runs along the shore of the lake and then follows the valley of the river Selenga; at a distance of 157 versts it crosses this river on a bridge 455 sagesnes long and enters the valley of the river Uda. The town of Verkhneoudinsk is situated near the junction of the Uda and Selenga. The further progress of the line is determined by the choice of the most advantageous spot to cross the Yablonovoi chain, and after much reconnoitering, it was found that the best route was first along the valley of the river Uda and then along the river Pogromnaya which falls into the Uda, where the line enters a plain covered with lakes, called the Vitimsk plateau, and then along the river Domna, one of the tributaries of the system of the river Lena. Passing the spot summit level between the two above mentioned rivers, the line continues ascending the eastern slope of one of the branches of the Yablonovoi chain, and at verst 3,838 attains its highest point 529 sagesnes above the level of the sea. The Yablonovoi chain serves as the spot summit level of the basins of the Lena and Amour, that is, of the Northern and Pacific oceans. The pass across this chain at the highest point, at verst 3,943, is 490 sagesnes above the level of the sea, and consequently lower than the pass across one of the branches of the chain. From this spot summit level the line gradually descends and sweeping round the hilly side of the district town of Chita by the bank of the river Shilka, it reaches the village of Matakan, situated opposite the town of Sretensk, which stands on the right bank of the above mentioned river.

The most difficult part of the line as regards earth and constructive works is the section from the town of Chita to the town of Sretensk along the valleys of the Ingoda and Shilka rivers. The valley of the former is narrow and winding, the mountains surrounding it are quite close to the river, forming steep slopes or projecting headlands, and in most places there is only a narrow space between the mountain and the river, which is almost always inundated when the level of the water rises. In a few places the valley of the river is sufficiently wide to admit of the possibility of conveniently drying the track. In this region the line either hugs the declivities or passes through submerged meadows but always keeps to the left bank of the Ingoda river. The upper part of the valley of the Shilka resembles the valley of the Ingoda, and its character only somewhat changes after verst 4,248; the direction of the river does not wind so often, the curves have a more open outline and

instead of separate headlands, high rocky slopes, some 10 versts long, descend into the river these slopes are to be used for carrying the railroad track.

On account of the local features which have been described there is a very considerable amount of earth work to be done in the Mysovsk-Sretensk section. The total quantity amounts to 2,032,000 cubic sagues, or 2,014 per verst, and the cost of it is estimated at 8,859,000 roubles. The deepest excavations are 16.62 sagues, and the highest embankments 10.87 sagues. Almost all the cuts in the valleys of the Ingoda and Shilka rivers, and many of those on the remaining portion of the line, will have to be hewn out of hard, rocky formations, so that out of 500,000 cubic sagues excavations, 300,000 have to be cut out of rocky ground. Furthermore, the cuttings in the Yablonovoi chain are saturated with water, which can only be drawn off with great difficulty, the soil is also in many places perpetually frozen and the excavations in such ground are 3.64 sagues deep, and therefore, the only conclusion to be arrived at is that the earth work in this section will be of an exceptionally difficult character. Besides this, in consequence of the steepness of the slopes of the banks of the Ingoda and Shilka rivers, all the embankments along them will have to be supported by retaining walls to the amount of 56,000 cubic sagues along a distance of 300 versts.

The difficulty of laying this section is further increased by the exceptional climatic conditions of the locality through which the line passes. The climate of the region beyond lake Baikal is quite continental; on account of its severity the changes of temperature are extreme; thus, on the Yablonovoi chain in June and July the day temperature rises to 25° Celsius and during the night falls to -5°. The air is characterized by its extreme dryness and the amount of moisture which falls during the year is inconsiderable. There is such a small quantity of snow that along the whole of the line to the lower part of the river Selenga the ground is hardly covered with it. Only there and along the shore of lake Baikal does the sledge road last any considerable length of time; along the rest of the distance from Verkhneoudinsk to the east, sledge roads are very rare and sledges are only driven along the ice on the rivers.

From meteorological observations recorded, it was shown that at Verkhneoudinsk in 1886 the temperature was only above freezing point for the three summer months; in 1887 during one summer month it was above zero, and at almost zero during two months; in 1888 it was above zero for two months, and during the three years period from 1886 to 1888 the highest temperature was in July, +37° Celsius, and the lowest in January, -47° Celsius, whilst on the Vitimsk plateau and the Yablonovoi chain even in summer a temperature of -5° Celsius was recorded. Furthermore in the upper part of the river Uda, on the Vitimsk plateau, in the Yablonovoi chain, and in the valleys of the Konda and Chita rivers, there is a perpetually frozen subsoil. The depth to which the soil is frozen, according to investigations made in the valley of the Chita river at a height of 340 sagues above the level of the sea, was on the average 3½ sagues, and in summer the ground thaws to a depth of 1.83 sagues, so that the remaining stratum, 1.67 sagues thick, is eternally frozen. On the Vitimsk plateau and the Yablonovoi chain the ground in summer thaws only to the depth of three-tenths of a sagene, and in the valley of the Kondyn river, to a depth of six-tenths of a sagene.

The continuation of the Siberian railway from Sretensk situated on the Shilka, a tributary of the Amour, up to the town of Khabarovka standing on the right bank of this latter river, a total distance of 2,000 versts, has not been thoroughly investigated in detail, and only some slight reconnoitering has been done, which shows that from verst 4,350 to verst 4,900 the line will have to be laid along the valleys of the Shilka and Amour. Further on, the line may be shortened by diverting it from the Amour and crossing it at verst 6,350 on a bridge, 1,200 sages long. The construction of the line will be subject to the same topographical conditions as the line of Mysovsk-Sretensk, besides which the construction of the line of Sretensk-Khabarovka will be rendered more difficult by the completely desert nature of the country covered with dense virgin forests, the silence of which has never been broken by the voice of man, especially in those places where the line diverges from the Amour where there is a total absence of any habitation or means of communication, and likewise in consequence of the necessity of conveying workmen and all ready-made railway appliances from European Russia by a circular route across the Pacific Ocean.

After crossing the Amour the line for a distance of 400 versts follows the valley of the river Ussuri which falls into the Amour and makes the boundary between the Russian and Chinese empires. The valley of this river is by no means wide and the numerous streams falling into the Ussuri separated by high spot summit levels, formed by the branches of the Sikhotee-Alin chain, entail a large amount of constructive works. The largest bridges are planned at versts 6,445, 6,585 and 6,697 across the Khor, Bikin and Iman rivers; they will be each 120 sages long. In some places the track approaches the edge of the Ussuri and it will be necessary to support the slope of the earth work. At verst 6,755 the line crosses the Ussuri river on a bridge 120 sages long. Further on, the line follows the foreland of lake Khanka and the valley of the Lefu river which falls into this lake before reaching the Nikolsk station at verst 6,982. Starting from this station the line runs along the valley of the Suyfun river, sometimes traversing places submerged by the waters of that river, and sometimes crossing the branches of the mountain chains approaching it; in these cases it is necessary to lay the track with an incline of 0.015, whilst the gradients on the whole of the other part of the line from Khabarovka to Vladivostok do not exceed 0.008. The line issues from the valley of the Suyfun river and passes on to the shore of the Ouglov and Amour gulfs, terminating at the town of Vladivostok, the station being situated on the shore of the bay of the Golden Horn. The total length of the Siberian railway from Cheliabinsk to Vladivostok along the main line is 7,083 versts, and 7,112 versts including branch lines to the principal rivers intersecting the main road.

For superintending the work of laying down the railway and in accordance with the gradations to be observed in its construction, the line is to be divided into seven sections: the Western Siberian from Cheliabinsk to the river Obi, including branch lines 1,328 versts; the Central Siberian from the Obi to Irkutsk, 1,754 versts; the Baikal circuit from Irkutsk to the pier of Mysovsk on lake Baikal, 292 versts; the Transbaikal from Mysovsk pier to the town of Sretensk on the Shilka river, 1,009 versts; the Amour section from Sretensk to Khabarovka on the Amour, 2,000 versts; the North-Ussurisk from Khabarovka to the village of Grafsk, 347 versts; and the South Ussurisk from Grafsk to Vladivostok, 382 versts, or 7,112 versts in all.

In 1891 and 1892, as has already been mentioned, the work of laying the two extreme sections, the West Siberian and the South Ussurisk, was commenced; and in 1893 work was begun on the Central Siberian section from the Obi to Krasnoyarsk. The South Ussurisk section will most probably be terminated in 1894, and the other two in 1893. In 1895 the North Ussurisk section will be commenced and in 1896 the rest of the Central Siberian railroad from Krasnoyarsk to Irkutsk will be begun, the first section of which will be finished in 1898, and the second, in 1900. In 1899 work will be commenced on the Transbaikal and Amour sections, and in 1900 the Baikal circuit will be begun; these will probably be finished in 1904. The whole line across Siberia, 7,112 versts long, will therefore be terminated in 12 years, counting from 1893.

Considering the sparseness of the population of the country through which the Baikal circuit, Transbaikal, Amour and Khabarovka sections pass, in consequence of which it will be necessary to send workmen mostly from European Russia, and also on account of the terms allowed for laying the Khabarovka, Transbaikal and Amour sections, when planning out the Siberian railway it was decided that navvies, masons and other special workmen, and also rails, fastenings and rolling stock, iron parts of bridges et cetera, would be sent as follows: for the Khabarovka section by sea to Vladivostok, and then further on by the Ussuri railway; for the Transbaikal section, also partly by sea to Vladivostok, then by rail to Khabarovka and then by the Amour and Shilka rivers as far as Sretensk, and partly by rail to Irkutsk and then by the Angara river and lake Baikal to Mysovsk pier; for the Baikal circuit section, by rail to Irkutsk; and for the Amour section, partly from the east by the same route as that used for the Transbaikal section, and partly from the west, by rail to Irkutsk, by water from Irkutsk to Mysovsk and then by the Transbaikal line to Sretensk. In general the object in view was to establish as quick as possible an uninterrupted steam communication between European Russia and Vladivostok through the whole of Siberia and to take temporary advantage of the water roads. These circumstances determined the system of gradation to be observed in laying the track in its separate sections. Thus the first stage of the work consists in laying the line to Irkutsk and finishing that already begun from Vladivostok to Grafsk; the second stage consists of the sections between the rivers necessary for the establishment of steam communication through the whole of Siberia, partly by railroad and partly by water; finally, the remaining sections which join up the works of the first and second stages into one continuous railroad are relegated to the third stage. As regards however the carrying out of the details of the plan of building the Siberian railway from Cheliabinsk to Vladivostok, it must be observed that the order of building the Western and Central Siberian sections from Cheliabinsk to Irkutsk can be fixed upon with the greatest certainty as they have been subject to more detailed investigation, this part of Siberia being nearer and more accessible from European Russia, more densely populated and its climatic and topographical conditions more favourable. The plan of carrying out the Grafsk-Khabarovka section may also be regarded as quite clear, as it closely resembles the Ussurisk line.

With reference to the Baikal-Circuit, Transbaikal and Amour sections, it is necessary to mention that the proposed dates of the termination of these lines may be liable to change on account of the totally different conditions under which they must be built, compared

with the Cheliabinsk-Irkutsk line. The Irkutsk-Khabarovka line has been but little investigated; it is far removed from European Russia, and passes through a desolate country with exceptional climatic and topographical conditions. The plan of building these three sections can therefore only be regarded as approximately correct, and in all probability the experience gained in laying the western portion of the Great Siberian line will determine the order and method to be undertaken in laying the eastern portion. In any case it will be necessary to make a second, final set of investigations from Irkutsk to Sretensk, and more detailed observations of the Amour section.

The Siberian railway, passing through an enormous expanse of country under the most widely differing topographical conditions could not be all included in one general technical type; and in order to diminish the cost of construction it was necessary to make some modifications in the technical conditions in general, and for the mountainous sections in particular; the basis of these modifications and simplifications has however been taken as a good and reliable construction, capable of being afterwards, in case of necessity, complexed and enlarged, but not in any case requiring the reconstruction of the line.

The limiting gradients on the level country sections have been fixed at 0.006 to 0.008 and the radii of the curves at 250 sagues; in the mountainous sections the gradients have been taken from 0.015 to 0.0174 and the radii at 120 sagues.

It is proposed to make the earth work for a single track of the ordinary width, 2.35 sagues wide on the embankments, and 2.20 sagues wide in the cuts. The normal batter of the embankments and cuts, as high as they go, will be  $1\frac{1}{4}$  for ordinary kinds of soil.

For the passage of water under the line and for crossing rivers, cast iron and stone pipes and wooden bridges will be laid, where the force of the moving ice or the character of the soil do not present any obstacles; over the large rivers permanent iron bridges with stone piers will be built. Rails of 18 pounds weight per foot run will be used along the line on a layer of ballast, 0.125 of a sagene thick, under the bottom of the rail. The dwelling houses for the overseers of the line, plate layers and watchmen will be built of all kinds of wood and of the simplest construction, adhering as much as possible to the local styles of building; the wooden buildings will be without foundations, on wooden or stone columns. All crossings in general will be left unguarded except those in towns or thickly populated points.

The greatest distance allowed between the stations is 50 versts, which corresponds to a running capacity of 3 sets of trains; in order to increase this capacity to 7 sets of trains per 24 hours on the main line horizontal spaces have been planned to admit of intermediate stations and sidetracks being made in case of necessity.

Separate passengers buildings, built of brick or wood and as small as possible, will be erected only at those stations where a large number of passengers may be expected, or where it will be necessary to provide refreshment rooms; at all other points some accommodation will be set apart in dwelling houses for the requirements of the station service or the convenience of casual passengers.

It is proposed to acquire sufficient rolling stock for the Siberian railway to be able to form 3 sets of army trains per 24 hours, composed of 60 axles, one set of trains being



composite consisting of passenger and freight cars; the engines are to be eight-wheeled; the passenger cars, partly eight-wheeled and partly six-wheeled, and the freight cars, four wheeled.

On account of the importance of the water supply to the traffic of the line and the difficulty of increasing it ultimately, it has been decided to arrange it only at the stations, that is, at distances of 50 versts, but to provide sufficient water for the passage of 7 sets of trains. In order to increase the water supply when required a supplementary apparatus of the simplest type may be provided at points between the stations.

Based upon these technical conditions, a preliminary estimate of the cost of building the Great Siberian Railway has been calculated, including rails, fastenings, rolling stock and permanent bridges across the large rivers. The distribution of the expenses according to the class of work is shown in the table on the following pages.

The estimate of the cost of constructing the Great Siberian Railway, as shown by the following table, does not however include all the expenses which this enterprise entails. In order that this undertaking might with greater ease fulfill the numerous obligations which devolve upon it, it has been deemed advisable to assist in the accomplishment of a number of auxiliary measures in conjunction with it, with the object on the one hand, of facilitating and diminishing the cost of the line itself, and on the other hand of increasing the economic and progressive influence which it will exercise on the prosperity of Siberia. The first of these auxiliary works is the construction of a branch line between the Siberian and Ural railways, in order to make use of the products of the Ural metallurgical works, as much as possible, for building the main line. Furthermore it has been decided to build some river wharves and lay branch lines to them; to improve the Siberian rivers in order to facilitate the transport of building materials; to assist the development of river steam navigation upon those river systems which adjoin the Siberian railway, and which are capable of being closely connected with it; to establish a route through the Northern Ocean to the mouths of the Obi and Yenisei; to assist colonization on the Siberian land in the region near the line; to encourage the iron works which may be established in Siberia near the railway; to form geological expeditions for continuing the geological investigation of the country which has already been commenced; to make an exhaustive description of the Amour district, et cetera.

To carry out these auxiliary enterprises during the time appointed for completing the sections of the first stage a sum of 14 million roubles has been put aside out of the Siberian railway building fund. When the work of the second and third stages is commenced, in all probability special sums will be in like manner appointed for carrying out the auxiliary enterprises, exclusive of the estimate of the cost of building the Great Siberian Railway.

| CLASS OF WORK.                                                | Cheliabinsk-Obi,<br>1,328 verst. |                       | Obi-Irkutsk,<br>1,754 verst. |                       | Irkutsk-Mysovsk,<br>292 verst. |                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
|                                                               | Total in<br>roubles.             | Roubles per<br>verst. | Total in<br>roubles.         | Roubles per<br>verst. | Total in<br>roubles.           | Roubles per<br>verst. |
| <b>A.</b>                                                     |                                  |                       |                              |                       |                                |                       |
| Expropriation of land . . . . .                               | 387,857                          | 292                   | 299,727                      | 171                   | 48,970                         | 168                   |
| Making the tract . . . . .                                    | 5,845,144                        | 4,401                 | 12,909,873                   | 7,360                 | 7,198,844                      | 24,654                |
| Construction works . . . . .                                  | 8,932,135                        | 6,726                 | 16,544,912                   | 9,738                 | 7,116,950                      | 24,374                |
| Laying the line . . . . .                                     | 3,923,854                        | 2,955                 | 4,464,685                    | 2,545                 | 742,049                        | 2,541                 |
| Appurtenances of the line . . . .                             | 176,140                          | 133                   | 257,701                      | 147                   | 36,675                         | 126                   |
| Telegraph . . . . .                                           | 367,773                          | 277                   | 358,074                      | 204                   | 70,201                         | 241                   |
| Buildings along the line . . . . .                            | 709,360                          | 534                   | 849,227                      | 484                   | 196,860                        | 674                   |
| Station buildings . . . . .                                   | 2,012,500                        | 1,515                 | 2,767,225                    | 1,578                 | 557,300                        | 1,906                 |
| Water supply . . . . .                                        | 617,840                          | 465                   | 1,304,195                    | 743                   | 178,730                        | 612                   |
| Station appurtenances. . . . .                                | 659,050                          | 496                   | 748,955                      | 427                   | 197,150                        | 675                   |
| General, administrative and un-<br>forseen expenses . . . . . | 4,500,570                        | 3,389                 | 5,525,115                    | 3,150                 | 1,510,575                      | 5,174                 |
| <b>Total . . . .</b>                                          | <b>28,132,223</b>                | <b>21,184</b>         | <b>46,029,689</b>            | <b>26,243</b>         | <b>17,854,304</b>              | <b>61,145</b>         |
| <b>B.</b>                                                     |                                  |                       |                              |                       |                                |                       |
| Rails and fastenings . . . . .                                | 8,583,922                        | 6,464                 | 11,550,900                   | 6,585                 | 1,867,108                      | 6,394                 |
| Rolling stock and workmen included                            | 8,086,700                        | 6,089                 | 10,691,950                   | 6,096                 | 1,671,730                      | 5,725                 |
| Carriage of rails, fastenings and<br>rolling stock . . . . .  | 2,558,634                        | 1,926                 | 5,000,359                    | 2,851                 | 917,678                        | 3,143                 |
| <b>Total . . . .</b>                                          | <b>19,229,256</b>                | <b>14,480</b>         | <b>27,243,209</b>            | <b>15,532</b>         | <b>4,456,516</b>               | <b>15,262</b>         |
| <b>Grand total . .</b>                                        | <b>47,361,479</b>                | <b>35,663</b>         | <b>73,272,898</b>            | <b>41,775</b>         | <b>22,310,820</b>              | <b>76,407</b>         |

| Mysovsk-Sretensk,<br>1,009 versts. |                       | Sretensk-Khabarovka,<br>2,000 versts. |                       | Khabarovka-Grafsk,<br>347 versts. |                       | Grafsk-Vladivostok,<br>382 versts. |                       | Total cost of the<br>7 sections, 7,112<br>versts. |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total in<br>roubles.               | Roubles per<br>verst. | Total in<br>roubles.                  | Roubles per<br>verst. | Total in<br>roubles.              | Roubles per<br>verst. | Total in<br>roubles.               | Roubles per<br>verst. | Total in<br>roubles.                              | Roubles per<br>verst. |
| 501,695                            | 497                   | 1,000,000                             | 500                   | 76,000                            | 219                   | 247,640                            | 649                   | 2,561,889                                         | 360                   |
| 13,237,808                         | 13,120                | 28,000,000                            | 14,000                | 4,582,353                         | 13,206                | 1,712,806                          | 9,724                 | 75,486,828                                        | 10,614                |
| 9,869,932                          | 9,782                 | 30,000,000                            | 15,000                | 3,320,712                         | 9,570                 | 2,657,280                          | 6,960                 | 78,441,921                                        | 11,030                |
| 2,931,002                          | 2,905                 | 6,000,000                             | 3,000                 | 1,344,325                         | 3,874                 | 1,189,760                          | 3,116                 | 20,395,675                                        | 2,896                 |
| 168,523                            | 167                   | 320,000                               | 160                   | 86,722                            | 250                   | 62,270                             | 163                   | 2,108,031                                         | 156                   |
| 242,106                            | 240                   | 480,000                               | 240                   | 104,252                           | 300                   | 118,420                            | 310                   | 1,740,880                                         | 245                   |
| 587,460                            | 582                   | 1,000,000                             | 500                   | 314,400                           | 906                   | 218,375                            | 572                   | 3,875,682                                         | 545                   |
| 1,867,450                          | 1,851                 | 3,600,000                             | 1,800                 | 881,250                           | 2,542                 | 1,170,150                          | 3,065                 | 12,356,575                                        | 1,808                 |
| 638,200                            | 632                   | 1,200,000                             | 600                   | 249,660                           | 720                   | 316,750                            | 830                   | 4,505,375                                         | 633                   |
| 734,110                            | 728                   | 1,400,000                             | 700                   | 248,500                           | 700                   | 393,100                            | 1,043                 | 4,385,865                                         | 617                   |
| 5,410,800                          | 5,362                 | 11,000,000                            | 5,500                 | 2,002,125                         | 5,700                 | 2,908,336                          | 7,613                 | 32,857,521                                        | 4,620                 |
| 36,189,140                         | 35,866                | 84,000,000                            | 42,000                | 13,210,999                        | 38,073                | 12,999,887                         | 34,045                | 237,416,242                                       | 33,524                |
| 6,442,416                          | 6,385                 | 12,765,528                            | 6,383                 | 2,254,200                         | 6,496                 | 2,443,851                          | 6,401                 | 45,907,925                                        | 6,455                 |
| 5,614,345                          | 5,564                 | 11,223,655                            | 5,612                 | 1,917,670                         | 5,526                 | 1,359,200                          | 3,563                 | 40,565,250                                        | 5,703                 |
| 5,063,916                          | 5,019                 | 9,566,652                             | 4,783                 | 1,355,713                         | 3,907                 | 858,113                            | 2,248                 | 25,321,065                                        | 3,560                 |
| 17,120,677                         | 16,968                | 33,555,835                            | 16,778                | 5,527,583                         | 15,929                | 4,661,164                          | 12,212                | 111,794,240                                       | 15,718                |
| 53,309,817                         | 52,834                | 117,555,835                           | 58,778                | 18,738,682                        | 54,002                | 17,661,051                         | 46,257                | 350,210,482                                       | 49,242                |

## CHAPTER XVII.

**The importance of the Great Siberian Railway.**

The importance of the Great Siberian Railway to progress; its bearing upon rural economy, colonization, metallurgical industry; gold mining, internal and foreign trade.

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THE enormous expenditure of 350 million roubles entailed by the construction of the Siberian railroad, which probably for a long time will not prove remunerative in the strict sense of the word, is explained by those numerous advantages not subject to arithmetical computation which may be attained by the Government with the realization of this grand enterprise. The previous historical-statistical article has demonstrated that the principal barrier to the development of culture in Siberia is the absence of regular communication, on the one hand between the most important administrative and industrial centres of Siberia, and on the other hand between Siberia and European Russia. Consequently when this principal obstacle is removed the causes will disappear which have for such a long time retarded the regular peopling of this extensive and richly endowed region and the rise in the culture of the aborigenes and settlers. In reality the Great Siberian Railway, intersecting the whole of Siberia for a distance of 7,112 versts, embraces a very wide zone, which cannot be taken at less than 100 versts on either side of the line, or about one million and a half square versts. This enormous area, which exceeds the whole extent of central Europe, Germany, Austro-Hungary, Holland, Belgium and Denmark, lies in the mean geographical latitudes, and as regards climate and soil possesses all the qualities favourable to the development of agriculture, rural economy and the industries connected with them. It is worthy of attention also, that according to the propitious choice of the direction of the Great Siberian Railroad which connects the fertile lands of Western Siberia and the distant region of Ussuri, also embraces the richest deposits of the noble metals, as will be seen by the accompanying map of the Russian Empire. If it be also remembered that the chosen route connects the extensive basins of such large rivers as the Obi, Yenisei and Amour and part of the Lena, it cannot be disputed that the line when once laid will give a powerful impetus to the whole economical development of the country, and will call into existence many new branches of industrial activity.

Turning to the more intimate influence of the Great Railroad upon the various features of industrial and economic life in Siberia, it is necessary to pause over the following. It is first of all evident that the chosen route traverses the rich Ishimsk, Barabinsk and Kulun-

dinsk steppes which have always been renowned for their fertility, and serve as a granary for Siberia. Figures have been already quoted showing that even the opening of the Ural line would be sufficient to cause an increased activity in these steppes and to forward considerable quantities of grain to the west, partly to the Baltic seaports. If the influence of the Ural line was so great, connected with these lands only by water communication, then an uninterrupted line of rails connecting them with the general network of lines in the Russian Empire ought to elicit a far greater increase of agricultural development. Under favourable conditions of soil and climate the productive power of the earth will draw an increase of population and have an indirect influence upon the regular colonization of the country.

Of late years in many parts of European Russia the increase of population from natural causes has brought about an excess of the labouring contingent, and the systematic increase of the number of peasants insufficiently provided with land, due to this fact, has already for some time past attracted the attention of the Government. Being desirous as far as possible to regulate the distribution of farms among the peasants and to provide the sufferers with the requisite amount of land, the Government has found it advisable to adopt certain measures tending on the one hand, to people the unpopulated fertile districts, and on the other hand, to give a regular outlet to the energies of the peasants insufficiently provided with land who are at present a burden on the State, and demand increased solicitude.

For these reasons free Government lands in the above mentioned localities are granted to settlers, and for their benefit a cheap rate has been fixed for conveying them by rail; in some cases they receive loans of money from the Government and certain other privileges are granted to them in order to assist them in the difficulty of emigrating, and of acquiring new household goods. Thanks to the immediate connection by rail between the «Granary of Siberia» and those governments of the Russian Empire where a lack of land is apparent, the enterprise about to be realized should become an excellent emigration regulator in the interests of the State in general. Taking into consideration the extent already given of suitable colonizing land in Siberia, it may be expected that in spite of the tendency of late years for emigration to Siberia, this country will for a long time be able to receive freely those who are desirous of availing themselves of its productive power, so great is its size and so vast the amount of suitable land for agricultural purposes.

When once the newly populated regions show signs of activity, the force of intellect will gravitate thither from European Russia and capital will find more advantageous use in the wider enterprises of industry. This might be encouraged by granting certain privileges in acquiring Crown lands to Russian nobles and other individuals in the Government service, who, as a more educated and cultured element, would be able to bring a civilizing influence with them. Thus the Great Siberian Railway, animating the uninhabited fertile lands ruled by the Governor-General of the steppes and opening up an extensive market for the sale of all products of the earth, would at the same time assist the successful solution of one of the most difficult problems of the State, namely, the definite organization of the economical condition of the peasants badly provided with land in the internal governments of European Russia.

The review of the mineral wealth and mining industry of Siberia has shown how enormous are the riches in the bowels of the country, and what little use has been

made of them up to the present time. Iron and coal, the two great factors of industrial development, are found nearly over all Siberia and in very rich veins. The proper working of these riches will give a powerful advancement to the development of progress in Siberia. The contiguity of veins of coal and iron ore in some places has led to the establishment of a few iron works, which have however not been in a very flourishing condition on account of the small demand and their great distance from the markets. These obstacles will disappear when the Siberian railway is constructed, as the railway itself will require such an enormous quantity of iron and iron goods that it can easily furnish enough work for several large iron works besides increasing the output of these works by bringing their goods within the reach of more distant markets. In spite of the enormous production of the Ural iron works, they will be unable to supply all the requirements of the Siberian line for iron goods; being comparatively cheap, they cannot be conveyed very long distances by rail. The appearance of iron works in Siberia, and more especially in the centre or the east, may be regarded therefore as a very natural conclusion; and if in addition to this it be mentioned that in order to enliven the native industry, the Government intends to render some assistance to private individuals in erecting such works, the future of the iron trade in Siberia may be considered quite assured. As regards mineral fuel, which is of such great importance in working a railway line, such quantities of it have been discovered in the formations that have been investigated, that the road will be well supplied for very many years to come. Although coal is found scattered along almost the whole line, wood is in many places so cheap that it can successfully compete with it, especially in those parts of the route which are intersected by navigable rivers, along which the wood may be floated from distant and wild places where vegetation is so rapidly renewed, and where there is no demand for it.

The Great Siberian Railway will also have a great influence upon gold mining. Placed in very difficult economic circumstances, this industry has only prospered in those places where very auriferous formations are worked; many of them are now neglected only because the present price of labour and machinery and the difficulty of obtaining credit upon easy terms do not admit of their being worked with sufficient profit. In America and in other countries, where gold mining is carried on, much poorer beds are worked, and therefore the output is larger than in Siberia. The Siberian railway should strive as far as possible to facilitate and cheapen the carriage of stores and implements to the gold mines, and also increase the supply of labour as many of the mines are suffering from an insufficiency of it. Under new conditions the cost of gold mining would inevitably decrease and this would enable poorer deposits to be worked. The output of gold would also considerably be increased and the industry would acquire a firmer foothold.

Turning to the question of the influence of the railway upon the extension of local trade, it is beyond a doubt that this influence will be most considerable; many articles or raw materials, for which there is at present no local demand, will find a ready sale at more distant markets; the rapid fluctuations in the prices of necessaries and the exceedingly high prices current at present will no longer exist, thanks to the rapid transport of goods.

All the above mentioned advantages which trade will derive from the Siberian railway are only the most intimate changes which will result from the opening of the line and the

new position of commercial intercourse between European Russia and Siberia on the one hand, and within the borders of Siberia on the other hand. In order, however, to grasp the whole extent of the actual importance of the Great Siberian Railway for Russian trade, the scope of vision must be enlarged and the probable consequences of this enterprise must be examined in connection with the fact that uninterrupted railroad communication will be established between Europe and the Pacific and the Far East. Thus the Siberian railway opens a new route, and new horizons for universal, as well as for Russian trade. This was clearly understood by the Russian merchants, whose representatives at the fair of Nizhni-Novgorod in 1889 expressed their hopes connecting the Russian merchant class with the realization of this enterprise in an address on the Siberian railway in the following terms: «This railroad will be of immense economic importance to Russia, and will give a great impulse to Russian industry; it will connect 400 million Chinese and 35 million Japanese with Europe through Russia. The strenuous endeavours made by Germany to gain possession of the markets of the Pacific, and the efforts which have been made to complete the Panama Canal visibly show that the economic struggle already commenced will end on the Pacific Ocean. The Canadian railroad has now appropriated part of the freights of silk, tea and furs which previously reached Europe through the Suez. Undoubtedly part of these goods will pass through Russia as the journey from Europe through Vladivostok to Shanghai will be made in 18 or 20 days, instead of 45 through Suez or 35 days at present by the Canadian railway».

It is particularly important for Russia that this change in the direction of the traffic between Europe and the east of Asia should be to its advantage, and taking part in this communication with a continuous railroad more than 10 thousand versts long it can reap all the advantages not only in the conveyance of goods from the east of Asia and west of Europe, but also those of a large producer and consumer more closely connected than all others with the people of the east of Asia. The Siberian line will therefore not only have the effect of increasing the importance of Russia in the universal markets but new sources of national wealth will abundantly open around her.

It may be added that China, Japan and Corea, whose united populations amount to over 460 millions and whose international trade turnover exceeds 500 million roubles in gold, have not reached by far the limit of development of their commercial intercourse with Europe, but are rather undergoing the elementary stage of it. The internal provinces of China, being further removed from the shore are but little accessible to Europeans; but when once China has opened its ports to international trade, the provinces which have as yet been but little frequented by Europeans, will in the natural course of events sooner or later enter the international markets and carry on international commerce. In any case the commercial intercourse between Europe and China has every reason to extend, and it is therefore not surprising that the nations of Europe are making strenuous endeavours to gain possession of the eastern markets of Asia and do not hesitate before any expenditure likely to lead to this object. But in this respect, owing to its contiguity to these above mentioned rich countries, Russia possesses important advantages over all the other nations of Europe. Thus, at a distance of only 4 to 4½ thousand versts from the Volga, the Siberian railway approaches so near to the Chinese frontier, that it would be quite possible, by means of a branch line running into

the borders of China, to start direct commercial interchange with the thickly populated internal provinces of China; in that case the Russian trade with China would extend very rapidly and the revenue of the main line of the Siberian railway would materially increase as well as the importance of Russia in the international trade with China. Taking also into consideration the predominating class of goods in the international trade of China, it is evident that the rather more expensive railway freights compared with those by sea, to some extent equalized by the smaller insurance charges, would not be an obstacle, hindering the transfer of Chinese goods from the sea route to the overland; and 58 per cent of the Chinese export trade is composed of two highly expensive articles, namely tea and silk. Besides quickness of transport and other conveniences, assuring the preference to railway transportation, there are yet particular circumstances, which in the mutual interests of China and Russia, will conduce to the transfer of the transport of tea to the railway route. In the present export trade of China, England plays the most important part, but at the same time she is striving to compete with China in the production of tea and has met with some success as the tea plantations in the Asiatic colonies of England, in India and Ceylon, supply the greatest amount of tea to the whole of Great Britain. There are many favourable conditions in the English colonies which contribute to the success of this competition; among others the network of railways in India is of great advantage in conveying the tea to the ports which are twice as near to Europe as the Chinese ports. On account of the above mentioned circumstances the export of Chinese teas to London and to other countries is rapidly declining, and this is not only a great loss to a large part of the population of China, but for the Chinese treasury also, as tea is subjected to a high export duty in China. In all probability the continued decline of the tea trade will be a very serious question for China, and in this respect the Siberian railway may serve as a great support to the Chinese tea trade, by delivering Chinese teas much quicker in Europe, not only compared with the sea voyage from China through London, but much quicker than the transport of Indian teas. Therefore not only Russia, but China also, is most anxious that Russia should take an active part in the carriage and sale of tea in Europe, as Russia is one of the largest and continually increasing markets for the consumption of tea.

This tangible analogy of the interests of the two countries in the export of tea can but conduce to the gravitation of other Chinese exports towards the new route to Europe, especially as the other principal article of the Chinese export trade, silk, will not only be capable of bearing the expense of a long railway journey, but can also be woven in Russia.

Russia on the other hand, through the agency of the Siberian railway, will be able to take a much more active part in supplying China with those goods which are now imported thither from other countries, and in this respect Russia may meet with particular success in exporting cotton and woollen goods, and even metals, which together compose about one-half of the whole Chinese import. The former on account of their high value compared with their weight, may be conveyed from Moscow, or even from beyond Moscow by rail, and the metals may be brought to China from the Ural, or better still from the nearer mining districts of the Tomsk and Yeniseisk governments, the region of Transbaikal and part of the government of Irkutsk, where the mineral wealth is but little inferior to that of the Urals and pos-



sesses all favourable qualifications for the extensive development of the mining industry. China will be a very near and valuable market for these districts as well as for other Siberian wares such as leather goods, furs et cetera. The opening of the Siberian railway will therefore enable Russia to profit by the proximity of China for the sale of its produce.

There is no occasion to dwell upon the political importance of the Great Siberian Railway. Its significance is clear from the fact that when the line is completed Russia will not only nominally but actually occupy that position in the east of Asia which it holds among its friends and enemies in Europe. As the line shortens the distance from European Russia to the east of Asia, in a like measure will the power of Russia increase in the East. In addition to this undisputed position, it may be mentioned that the favourable conditions already mentioned occurring from the opening of the line and extending commercial intercourse between Russia and the nations of the East, will undoubtedly conduce to strengthen friendly political relations with those countries. These friendly relations will be cemented by the mutual interests in the field of universal economic activity. Finally the opening of a railway line to the Pacific Ocean will enable Russia to carry on more direct intercourse with the United States of America, which in spite of being the great competitor of Russia in the grain trade of Europe, in consequence of the solidarity of its political and other interests, cherishes sincere sympathy for Russia.











# MAP OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

SHOWING THE GREAT SIBERIAN RAILWAY

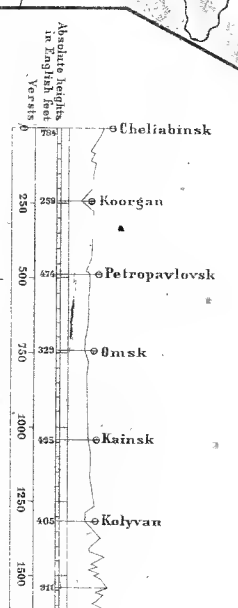
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S<sup>t</sup>. PETERSBURG

by the DEPARTMENT OF TRADE and MANUFACTURE



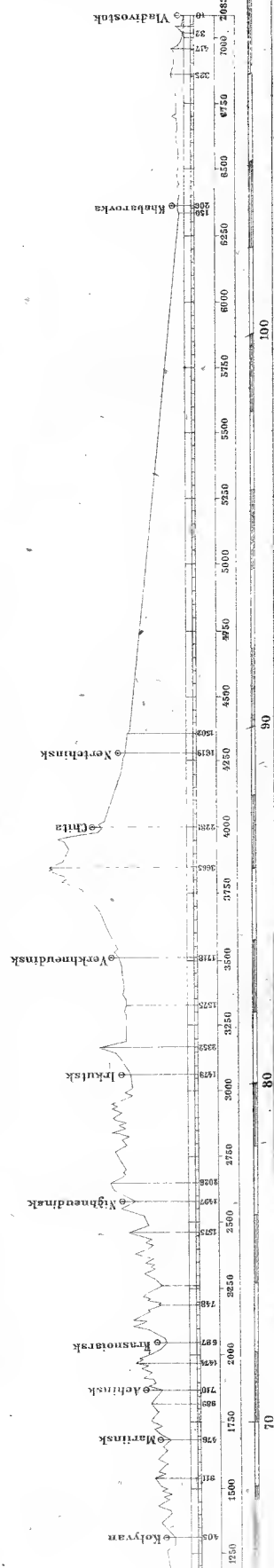
Operating railways, 31,983 versts  
Railways under construction  
Railways directions rejected  
Total length of the Great Siberian Railway from Cheliabinsk to Vladivostok 7112 versts

Gold mines  
Gold produced in 1890, in pounds.  
Silver produced in 1890, in pounds.  
Platinum produced in 1890 in pounds.





LONGITUDINAL PROFILE OF THE ROAD-BELT FOR THE GREAT SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

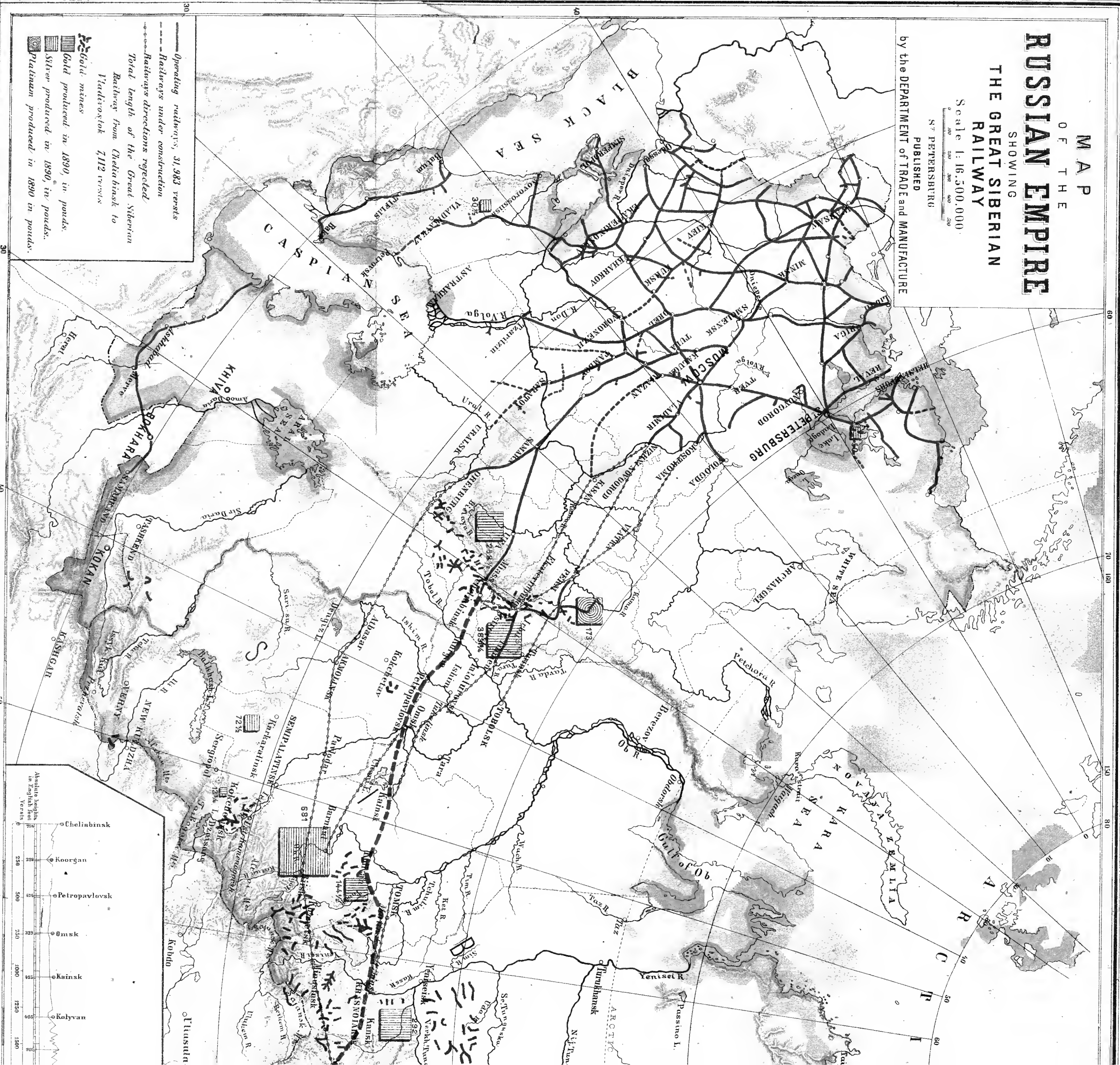


# MAP OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

SHOWING THE GREAT SIBERIAN RAILWAY

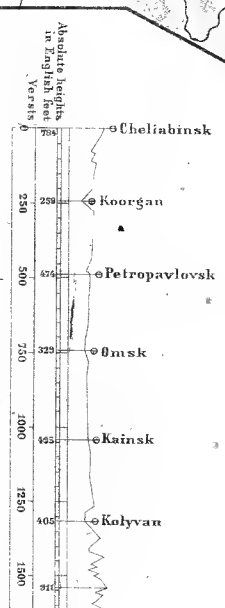
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